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Catholic priest shot dead in Ilocos Norte

SPORTS / A24

Sharapova crushes US Open opponent

WORLD / A20

US senator arrested in airport toilet claims he's not gay

METRO / A17

LTO identifies owners of vehicle that brought hazing victim to hospital

ACROSS / A13

Gov't loses P2M daily to oil smuggling in Subic

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, August 30, 2007 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 263 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Kintanar widow: I can fly to The Hague to testify

By Fe Zamora

THE WOMAN WHO BLAMES JOSE MA. Sison for the murder of her husband hopes that the suspect is given due process.

This was part of a brief text message sent to the INQUIRER by the widow of one of the two rebel leaders allegedly ordered

KINTANAR/ A6

Dutch envoy: There's basis for arrest

By Cynthia D. Balana, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Alcuin Papa

POLICE ARRESTED SELF-EXILED communist leader Jose Ma. Sison in the Netherlands on Tuesday because there was a basis to bring him to justice, Dutch Ambassador to the Philippines Robert Vornis said yesterday over a Philippine government TV station.

Vornis said that as indicated in the press statement of the Dutch national prosecutor's office, Sison was arrested in Utrecht for involvement in criminal activities in the Philippines, specifically for ordering from the Netherlands the murder of two former comrades—Romulo Kintanar in 2003 and Arturo Tabara in 2004.

Kintanar and Tabara had broken away from the Sison-led Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). *(See related story on this page.)*

The CPP claimed responsibility for the murder of Kintanar, saying the former NPA chief was a military agent.

In Malacañang, officials said the Philippines would provide evidence to prosecute Sison, founding chair of the CPP, in the Netherlands.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, who blushed at a press conference in Malacañang when he admitted he was "very excited" about Sison's arrest, said the government helped the widows of

DUTCH/ A6

NDF warns arrest to end peace talks, orders more strikes

By Christian V. Esguerra, TJ Burgonio and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

THE LEFTIST-LED NATIONAL DEMOcratic Front yesterday warned the arrest of exiled rebel leader Jose Ma. Sison could spell the end of peace talks with the Arroyo administration.

Hand in hand with the warning, the

NDF WARNS/ A6

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY: A wide picture window dominates the 2nd floor of the National Democratic Front headquarters in Utrecht, Netherlands, where Jose Ma. Sison held office before his arrest on Tuesday. The NDF office was also raided by Dutch police, who seized CDs, computers, books and documents, according to an NDF staff member. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Abalos tied to NBN deal

Solon cites many trips to China for golf, sex

By Norman Boradora and Nikko Dizon

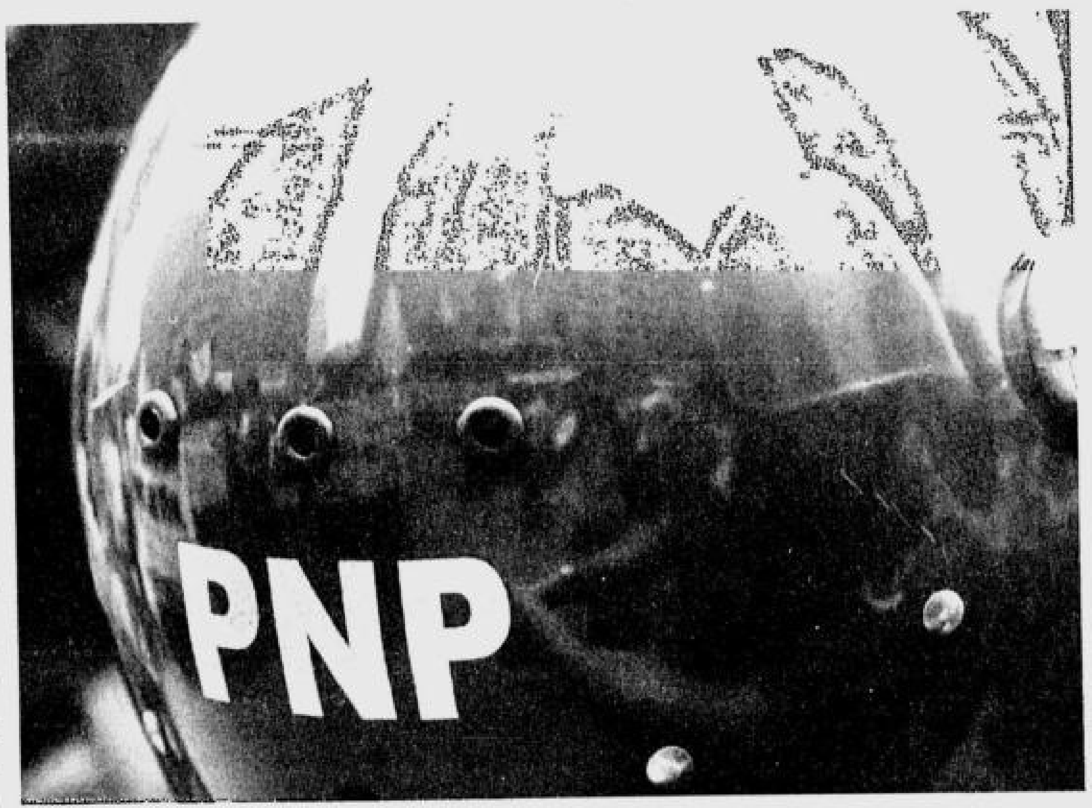
COMMISSION ON ELECtions Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. may have played a key role in the ZTE Corp. of China bagging the country's national broadband network (NBN) project with a $329-million bid, an opposition congressman yesterday said.

"Apparently, Chairman Abalos' unofficial trips to China courtesy of ZTE and his golf games with the officers of ZTE can hardly be characterized as just friendly and totally innocuous. He was a man on a mission," Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla said in a privilege speech.

"Could it be that that mission is worth P15 billion?" he asked. The NBN project would connect all government offices.

Padilla said Abalos played golf with executives of the Chinese telecommunications firm in Shenzhen and in Mandaluyong City where the Comelec chair once served as mayor just "weeks before April 2007" when the contract was signed.

ABALOS/ A8



REFLECTIONS ON DISCONTENT: Makati cop's helmet mirrors the image of KMU, Migrante and other militant groups marching toward the Dutch Embassy to condemn the arrest of Sison. REM ZAMORA

No strangers on int'l day for 'desaparecidos'

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THEY ARE STRANGERS TO ONE another but a common cause has brought them together as daughters—to rescue their missing parents from the hands of their captors.

Joining the hundreds of families of "desaparecidos" who will march to Plaza Miranda today, the International Day for the Disappeared, are Lorena Santos, 24, and May Wan Dominado, 25.

They are among the latest addition to the mounting list of family members searching for parents or children in lesser known cases of enforced disappearances in the country.

Lorena's father, Leo Velasco, a peace consultant of the National Democratic Front, was "abducted" in the morning of Feb. 19 in Cagayan de Oro City while on his way to a meeting.

May Wan's mother, Luisa Poso-Dominado, a survivor of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship and a staunch Iloilo-based human rights advocate, disappeared on the night of April 12 after three armed men waylaid the van taking her home from Antique.

At the march today, bystanders might just regard these two women as any other angry militant in another politically charged protest action against the government.

But the public eye might miss

NO STRANGERS/ A6

'PING-PONG DIPLOMACY'

Senate votes to reopen 'Garci'; playing tape on hold

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE LAST NIGHT VOTED TO reopen the "Hello Garci" case but averted a potentially divisive showdown by leaving open the question of whether to listen to the controversial Garci tape.

In closed door caucus, the senators put off the debate on whether to limit the probe to military's wiretapping operations or to include in its inquiry allegations of massive cheating in the 2004 elections.

They also agreed that the probe would be conducted by three committees holding joint hearings instead of by the committee of the whole, where all 23 senators will be taking part.

Both administration and opposition senators emerged from the two-hour long caucus satisfied with the outcome, which sidestepped a possibly explosive confrontation among members on an issue dear to Malacañang.

The Hello Garci tape contains wiretapped phone conversations supposedly between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano on how to rig the results of the 2004 presidential election.

As agreed upon by the senators, the probe will now be undertaken by the committee on national defense and security (chaired by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon) as the lead group, with the participation of the committee on accountability of public officers and investigations (or blue ribbon), chaired by Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano), and the committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws (chaired by Sen. Richard Gordon).

SENATE/ A8

Bishops fail to heal split of 2 'Couples'

By Nikko Dizon

PHILIPPINE PRELATES YESTERDAY failed to resolve a split in Couples for Christ (CfC) but remained optimistic that its squabbling leaders would thrash out their conflicts and reunify one of the Catholic Church's largest lay movements in the world.

"The split will be temporary but both parties will remain open to unification in the future," Bishop Gabriel Reyes reported following a daylong

BISHOPS/ A8

SWERTENG ASO NAMAN NYAN!

'Queen of Mean' leaves dog $12M

NEW YORK—LEONA Helmsley's dog will continue to live an opulent life, and then be buried alongside her in a mausoleum. But two of Helmsley's grandchildren got nothing

QUEEN/ A8

Art docs work on 'dying' Botong murals in PGH

By Allison W. Lopez

LIKE THE SICK PATIENTS BEing wheeled into the country's first public hospital, the "blistered and crackled" paintings in the lobby of the Philippine General Hospital were in dire need of immediate attention.

But just when they were on the brink of "collapsing," the four murals created by National Artist Carlos "Botong" Francisco in 1953 were saved by the National Museum with valuable help from the US Embassy.

"They were very weak, very deteriorated. If nobody noticed

ART DOCS/ A6

PGH'S TREASURE: US envoy Kristie Kenney listens to conservator Willie Estonato explain how he restored, with a lot of US help, Botong Francisco's mural, "History of Philippine Medicine," at PGH lobby. ERIK ARAZAS

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(All in exact order)

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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

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Priest shot dead in Ilocos

By Cristina Arzadon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAOAG CITY—"WHAT are they doing to us priests?"

Fr. Leonardo Ruiz of the Laoag diocese's Social Action Center raised the question shortly after a fellow priest, Florante Rigonan, was shot dead in Pinili town for still unknown reasons on Tuesday.

Rigonan, 48, had just left a house in Barangay Puritac, Pinili, where he had dinner and performed a prayer service at around 10 p.m. when the gunmen attacked. He was hit several times, most of them in the back, as he was about to board his Toyota Hi-Ace van.

Police recovered 10 spent shells for an Armalite rifle from the scene.

"This is a sad day for the Catholic community," Ruiz told the INQUIRER by phone. "You just don't kill anyone, especially a priest."

Rigonan was the first Catholic priest in Ilocos Norte to have been felled by assassins' bullets in recent church history.

He had been the priest at the St. Isadore Parish in Pinili since 2001. He was also appointed diocesan spiritual director in 2001.

Ordained in 1997, he was first assigned to the St. Michael's Parish in Currimao town in 1999.

Police said the murder could not have been politically motivated because Rigonan was not known to be involved in any church advocacy outside his parish.

RIGONAN

The victim mainly performed administrative functions, said Ruiz, who leads church-initiated activities such as the anti-"jueteng" campaign and environmental protection.

Ruiz said Rigonan was a member of the diocese's Commission on Temporalities, which is tasked with looking into the properties of the church. Aside from his parish duties, Rigonan looked into the welfare of the priests like their hospitalization and retirement.

The killing has sent a chilling message to members of the clergy, especially those who are known to be active in church advocacy, Ruiz said. Rigonan was not known to be involved in church causes that could court the ire of certain people, "yet he was killed brutally," he added.

Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Ilocos regional police director, said he would personally supervise the investigation of the murder. He said the police had formed a task force to look into the motives. *With a report from Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

AN APPARENTLY AILING Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez is helped to his chair during yesterday's meeting of the National Security Council in Malacañang. His ailment is still a mystery, although he said he was hospitalized a few weeks ago for bleeding ulcers. LYN RILLON

Amnesty for Reds who yield OKd

By Michael Lim Ubac

IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S TWO-pronged approach to ending armed rebellions, the National Security Council late Tuesday approved in principle a proposal for the grant of amnesty to communist rebels who surrender and lay down their arms.

With President Macapagal-Arroyo presiding, a meeting of security and justice officials in the NSC discussed in detail the proposal for an amnesty proclamation for members of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army.

However, the President wanted to get additional inputs from other national leaders, past and present, and ordered the convening of a full NSC meeting next Tuesday, to include former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Corazon Aquino, senior congressional leaders and local government executives.

A final presentation of the amnesty proposal will be made in that meeting, said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

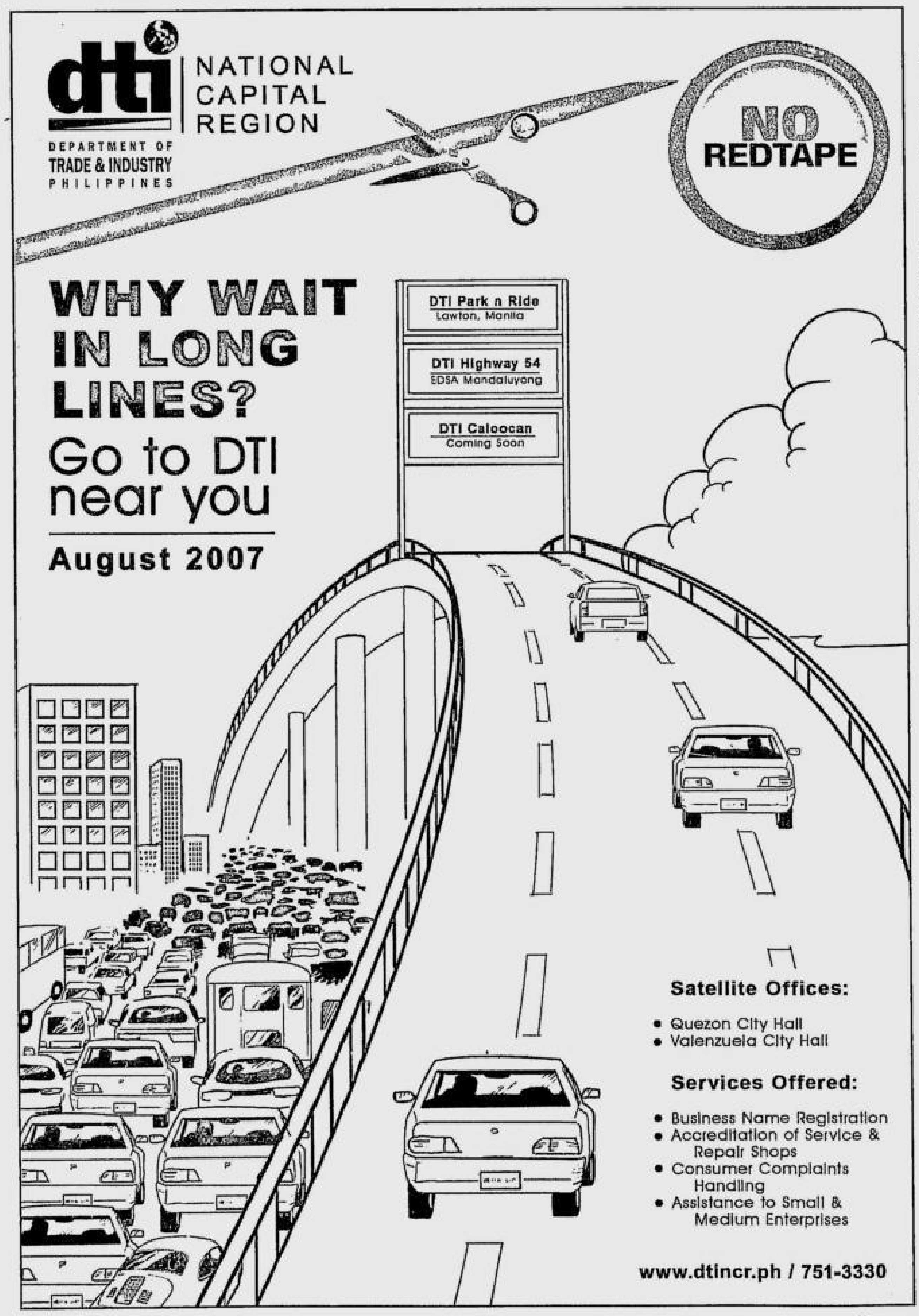
Ms Arroyo also wanted a congressional concurrence with such a presidential proclamation, he said.

On Friday, Ms Arroyo presided over a peace assembly for Central Visayas held in Tagbilaran, Bohol, during which she ordered the Armed Forces to crush the communist insurgency, the Muslim rebellion in Mindanao and "sheer terrorism" before her term ends in 2010.

But she said the government would continue to use "hard and soft power" in dealing with insurgency and extremism.

Jesus Dureza, presidential adviser for peace, said that in last Tuesday's meeting, the NSC members had a "common consensus that it is something that we can work on."

But for it to be legal and binding, a presidential proclamation, which he expects to be issued before Christmas, should be concurred in by both chambers of Congress, he said.



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Air Force aces join Basilan operations

By Tarra Quismundo

TO AVOID A REPEAT OF THE JULY 10 Basilan debacle blamed on the lack of air support, the Philippine Air Force (PAF) is sending its highly trained officers to the battlefield to boost the military campaign against Moro rebels by enhancing air-to-ground coordination during combat operations.

PAF chief Lt. General Horacio Tolentino told the INQUIRER that the Air Force would deploy a "sufficient number" of highly trained airmen to Basilan to serve as ground guides for pilots providing air support to the military offensive.

Tolentino declined to reveal further details for security reasons.

"We will be sending Air Force officers and enlisted personnel to be embedded with the ground troops. They will work as forward air controllers on the ground, directing our pilots to the target," Tolentino said.

Forward air controllers are tasked to guide pilots to their target by accurately giving the location of the enemy. Usually, however, pilot guidance is provided also from the air by aircraft buddied with assault planes and choppers.

Feedback from those on the ground, usually from the Army and the Marines, is also crucial for target confirmation as required under the military's rules of engagement.

This time, PAF has decided to put its men on the ground to do the direction from there.

"Tactically, it will help because these officers can give positive information on the target immediately," said Tolentino, a helicopter pilot who led air support and resupply missions during the Mindanao battles in the mid-70s.

It was a tactic rarely done but deemed worth this time as a lapse in air-to-ground coordination was among the suspected reasons for the pull-back of air support during crucial operations in Basilan on July 10. Fourteen Marines were killed that day.

Tolentino had said pilots called to drop munition on enemy territory that day made some contact with troops on the ground, but communication was fuzzy. Gunships decided to turn back as they could not spot the target clearly, lacking proper guidance from the ground.

Friendly troops were also too close to the enemy that dropping bombs without target confirmation was too risky.

On top of expert air control, PAF men on the ground will also help operation commanders assess the efficiency of air support, the official said.

GMA leaves for KL for 'social visit'

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS leaving today for a "social visit" to Malaysia.

Ms Arroyo will attend the 50th anniversary celebration of Malaysia's independence in Kuala Lumpur on Aug. 31 upon the invitation of the Malaysian king.

But she will also discuss the resumption of peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which the Malaysian government hosts.

"The President will take the opportunity to reiterate to her Malaysian hosts the Philippines' strong commitment to the peace process and at the same time update the Philippine community on developments here at home," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

The President will depart at 2 p.m. today with a small delegation.

Ms Arroyo will also take advantage of her trip to meet with the local Filipino community tonight, where she is expected to talk about developments at home, before joining other leaders for the celebration of Malaysia's nationhood tomorrow.

She is expected to be back in Manila at 3:55 a.m. on Saturday. *Juliet Labog-Javellana*

AD CONGRESS MOA
Officials of the 20th Philippine Ad Congress and the Philippine Daily Inquirer join hands after yesterday's signing of a memorandum of agreement for the holding of the annual affair. They are: Jocel Adorable, INQUIRER assistant vice president and marketing director; Rene Reinoso, INQUIRER senior vice president for marketing and sales; Yoly V. Ong overall chairperson of the congress; Matec Villanueva, congress administrative committee chairperson; and Pepito R. Olarte, INQUIRER VP for advertising. EUGENE ARANETA

Preparation for verdict an 'overkill,' says Erap

By Volt Contreras

STEPPING UP RHETORIC ON THE expected outcome of his P4-billion plunder case, detained ex-President Joseph Estrada yesterday dismissed as "overkill" the government's plan to deploy some 6,000 antiriot personnel in Metro Manila on the day the antigraft court hands down its decision.

"If people do come out in the streets during the promulgation of the verdict, it will probably be to celebrate with me as I regain my freedom," the popular actor-turned-politician said in a statement issued by his party, Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP).

The exact day of the verdict has not been set by the SandiganBayan but it is expected to be on or before Sept. 15, the end of the prescribed 90-day period within which it should decide the case from the time it was submitted for decision last June 15.

"Why would people protest an acquittal...most Filipinos believe I am innocent of these charges?" continued the 70-year-old Estrada.

"This is a clear case of overkill—how can the administration justify deploying 6,000 troops to secure the Sandigan-Bayan while sending a very small contingent to help out government troops in (war-torn) Basilan," Estrada chided.

Government had said their security plans anticipated rallies by pro-Estrada supporters. Police officials are wary of a repeat of the May 1, 2001 riots triggered by Estrada's arrest in 2001.

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, acting as Estrada's spokesman, said in the PMP statement that the former president who was ousted in 2001 "has no interest in reclaiming power or running for any public office once he is declared innocent."

"All he seeks at this point is justice, for himself and for the more than 10 million Filipinos who voted him into office in 1998," Rodriguez said.

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Marcos crony agrees to deal, but bank won't

By Jerry Esplanada

A GOLF CRONY OF THE LATE dictator Ferdinand Marcos has volunteered to enter into a compromise deal with the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), the agency tasked to recover the ill-gotten wealth of Marcos, his close relatives and associates.

Andres V. Genito Jr. has also expressed willingness to fully disclose his assets, including those sequestered by the government in 1986, according to PCGG commissioner for litigation Nicasio Conti.

Genito, who is now in his 70s and is currently based in Bacolod City, is the main respondent of PCGG Civil Case No. 4, filed in 1986 by then chair Jovito Salonga and which remains pending with the Sandiganbayan.

Conti noted, however, that there was a big problem in the government's case involving Genito.

Not cooperative

He said the Bank of Commerce (Bancommerce), has been blocking access to at least 22 United States dollar and peso accounts under the names of Genito and his wife Ludivina.

In a July 27 letter to PCGG chair Camilo Sabio, Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera said that "despite repeated directives from the Sandiganbayan, [Bancommerce] remains evasive in coming up with an updated outstanding balance of bank accounts in the name of Andres and Ludivina Genito."

The PCGG has sought the help of the central bank's Monetary Board and the Anti-Money Laundering Council, Conti said.

Conti said the AMLC and the central bank can bring pressure on Bancommerce, "under pain of administrative and criminal sanctions, to provide information on the [Genito bank accounts] which remains unaccounted for."

Devanadera said that even if the offense was committed long before the passage of the Anti-Money Laundering law, the act of concealing the funds "is a continuing offense that is subject to investigation by the AMLC."

The Bancommerce accounts are estimated to be worth "more or less half a billion pesos," said lawyer Jay Ermin Ernest Louie Miguel, director of the PCGG legal department.

The accounts had originated from the Kanlaon Towers branch of the Traders Bank on Roxas Blvd., Manila. They were absorbed into the Bank of Commerce following the merger of the two banks in 2001.

Genito's accounts "should have been automatically transferred to Bancommerce but the bank makes it appear they are not with them," Miguel said.

"Mr. Genito himself had requested for an update on the outstanding balance of the accounts," but Bancommerce has yet to act favorably on his request, he said.

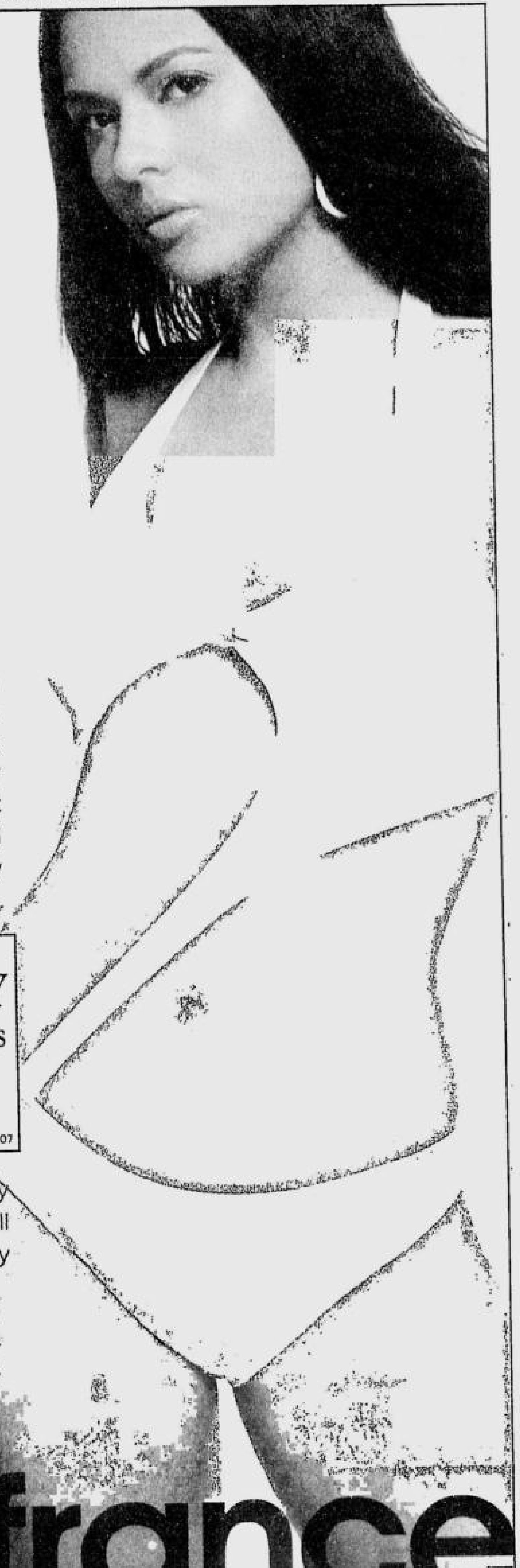
Full disclosure of the existence of the Genito accounts would be the initial step to a possible compromise agreement with the PCGG, Devanadera said in her letter to the PCGG.

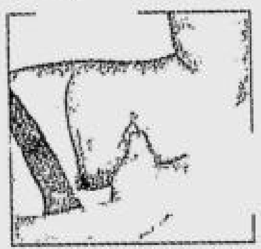
According to the charges in civil case No. 4, Genito was the recipient of funds illegally obtained by Marcos.

It said Genito "acted as the dummy, nominee and agent of the Marcoses in demanding and receiving commissions, bribes, kickbacks and other improper payments or considerations from persons or corporations entering into contracts with the government."

Genito also allegedly "raided government financial and banking institutions of millions of pesos through loans, guarantees and other financial accommodations without or with grossly insufficient collaterals."

Lose Fat in all the Right Places

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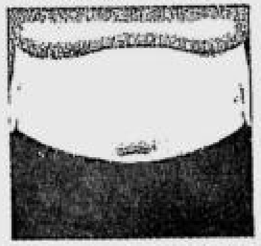
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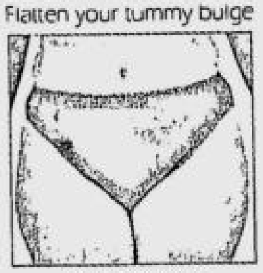
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No strangers on int'l day for 'desaparecidos'

From page A1

this reality: They are daughters—not young enough to miss a mother's hug or needy of a father's advice—who suddenly woke up one day to a different role to portray and chores to render for their families.

Aborted review for bar exams

"I don't cry in public but I really try not to cry at all because there are too many things that I have to attend to and it's hard being a mother to a sister," May Wan told the INQUIRER on Tuesday night.

In the beginning, she thought she had it all figured out.

She would take the review course at the University of the Philippines College of Law in Diliman, study hard and take the bar exams—three days from now.

But barely a day in Manila, she immediately returned to her hometown when she was told the bad news in a text message. The last time she saw her 52-year-old mother was at the pier—the day before the "abduction"—sending her off to Manila.

"There were no signs that it will be our last time together. I've been to Manila frequently and she has always sent me off," May Wan said.

On the day she returned home, she assumed full responsibility of the household and of her 15-year-old sister with help from some relatives. (Her father, a Bayan Muna member, rarely goes home for security measures.)

Filing in the gaping hole

"If this is not easy for me, it's not easier for my younger sister who is at the phase of her life when a mother is needed the most," she said.

With her minimal experience of taking care of an adolescent, she moved past the day-to-day struggle of filling in the gaping hole their mother had left unwittingly.

In between activities and campaigns in search for her mother and a friend—Nilo Arado, who was with her in the van during the incident—she managed to browse through her law books and review materials to prepare herself for the bar exams.

"I am no longer expecting to pass it. But I am taking it anyway," she said matter of factly.

WOMEN DESPERATELY SEEKING LOVED ONES: Edita Burgos leads mothers and other relatives of the "desaparecidos" in a House forum on enforced disappearances at the Batasan Pambansa on Wednesday. JOAN BONDOC

Though enrolled at UP, she dropped her review classes altogether because her search for her mother has taken up all her time.

Along with some relatives, she made the rounds in her province, gathering evidence, filing appropriate cases in trial courts, talking to people and informing them of her mother's plight.

'Mother needs me most'

"Sometimes it is so frustrating when people don't listen to me during our campaign activities. But I have to endure it with patience and determination because this is the time when my mother needs me most," she said.

But she has no time to weep because every moment wasted could spell the difference between life and death for her mother, she said.

May Wan might have given up hope on the upcoming examination but never on the thought that one day her mother will come home to restore the order of things in their household, listen to her latest adventures and watch movies with them again, she said.

"I don't want to let go of that hope ... if I lose that belief that she is still alive, I don't think I have any reason to live, too," she admitted.

Prepared for worst

Lorena, an only child, has also been holding on to that same hope since her father disappeared.

As a member of human rights group Karapatan, she assisted mothers and fathers, siblings or children in their search for their missing loved ones. It somehow prepared her for her "worst fear."

"I used to assist them but now I am one of them," she told the INQUIRER.

Lorena said she grew up not seeing her father all the time. But they were really close that she could tell him everything—about her dreams, friends, plans and even heartaches.

"Tatay wasn't around that much but at least I knew he was out there somewhere. But now, I don't see him and I don't even know where he is," she said wiping away tears.

(Velasco has been linked to the Magdalo group in its attempt to overthrow the Arroyo administration in 2003.)

In mid-July, she flew to Cagayan de Oro City and visited the place where her father was "abducted" to gather evidence and retrieve her father's pair of eyeglasses, which witnesses said, fell when he tried to break loose from his abductors.

The trip turned out to be a "sentimental journey," she said. "I never found the eyeglasses. I learned that a witness found it in the dirt and turned it over to a member of the media. It is supposedly in the hands of the police now."

Aside from the unimaginable torture her father might be going through now, the thought of him not being able to see clearly broke her heart too.

Lorena took several months after her father went missing to finally come out in the open and ask help from the public. "Knowing Tatay's status, being branded as the enemy of the state, I also feared for my life. I could be next. But if I don't take risks, who will search for him?" she said.

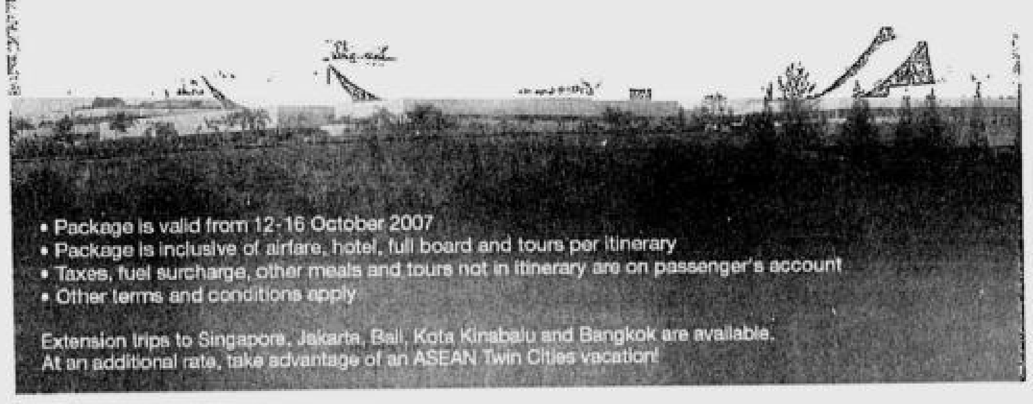
Last month, she drifted from one military camp to another in Metro Manila in search of clues. But the only thing she got from military officers were mere denials, she lamented.

Helping others good enough

"I don't know where I get my strength. I just get through the day looking for him, hoping to find a certain clue that might lead me to him," she said.

But if all else would fail in the end, Lorena said she would just take comfort in the belief of a friend—whose father also a desaparecido—that helping others find their loved ones was tantamount to rescuing their missing fathers, too.

"My friend said if we succeed in finding other people's missing loved ones. It would be like we have found ours too," she said.



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ROYAL BRUNEI

Art docs work on 4 'dying' ...

From page A1

it, they would collapse sooner or later," said Willie Estonato, a painting conservator from the National Museum.

The priceless oil paintings by Botong, a master muralist from Angono, Rizal, depicted the different periods in the history of Philippine Medicine—from the precolonial period, all throughout the Spanish and American invasions to the modern era.

They are currently undergoing their third restoration through a $38,631 (P1.73M) grant from US Ambassador Kristie Kenney's fund for cultural preservation.

Kenney said the embassy chose to fund the project because the paintings represented a "great partnership" between the two countries.

Particularly special

"This one's particularly special—a National Artist, an historic building ... one that provides great service to the people," said Kenney.

One of the murals, referred to as "No. 3," featured foreign doctors vaccinating ailing Filipinos during the American colonial period.

Around $300,000 has been spent by the US government in the Philippines for its cultural projects for the last five years, Kenney said.

She also said that the embassy would soon finance conservation efforts on the tourist-famous Banawe rice terraces. Unesco has threatened to strike out the rice fields carved out of mountainsides from its list of the world's wonders unless rehabilitation efforts are undertaken soon.

Estonato said the huge financial assistance for the restoration of the Botong murals was very "helpful" because all the materials and chemicals needed for the process were costly and imported.

Expensive technology

"Restoration is a science, and now we can use more advanced technology in restoring the murals, but it is of course expensive," he said.

The team of six conservators and technicians began work on the grime-ridden murals in October 2006, but aside from their huge sizes (296.5 cm x 285 cm each), Estonato said cleaning was the "hardest part."

"We can't overclean. The chemical cleaning is painstakingly thorough ... we even have to test the chemicals we use," he said.

An assessment report on the paintings found that dirt and other residues permeated the paint layers, and that there were extensive networks of "blisters, bulging and crackling," aside from "abrasions and cuts" ranging from minute to palm-size.

The murals were restored twice before—first in 1974 by Prof. Tomas Bernardo, through the UP Medical Alumni Society, Malacañang Presidential Museum and PGH, and the second in 1991, also by Bernardo and the UP Medicine Class of 1956.

Cracks and holes

An inspection of the fabric lining used to cover the back of the paintings showed cracks and holes, or grave signs of "slackening."

Two of the murals that need major treatment will undergo a complicated series of steps, including solubility analysis, dismantling from stretchers, mechanical cleaning, relaxation and application of protective facing papers.

The two other murals which require less work will undergo physical cleaning, chemical cleaning and stabilization.

Aside from grime, Estonato blamed the "fluctuating temperature" for the rapid deterioration of the murals, which were simply displayed on the lobby walls without any form of protection.

Right temperature

"The right temperature is +/- 25 degree Celsius, while the humidity should be at +/- 60°C. If it's too hot, it will dry the canvas. The people who pass by the area increase the humidity, and the paintings will absorb this heat," he said.

As such, PGH spokesperson Michael Tee said conservation efforts will be undertaken after the restoration to prolong the lives of the precious murals, but they will not be taken out of the lobby so everyone who enters the hospital will still get a glimpse of the paintings.

Protective glass coverings and special lighting will soon be constructed to prevent the murals from any kind of physical contact after its reinstallation, so that in time, the Botong murals need not be taken to the "emergency room."

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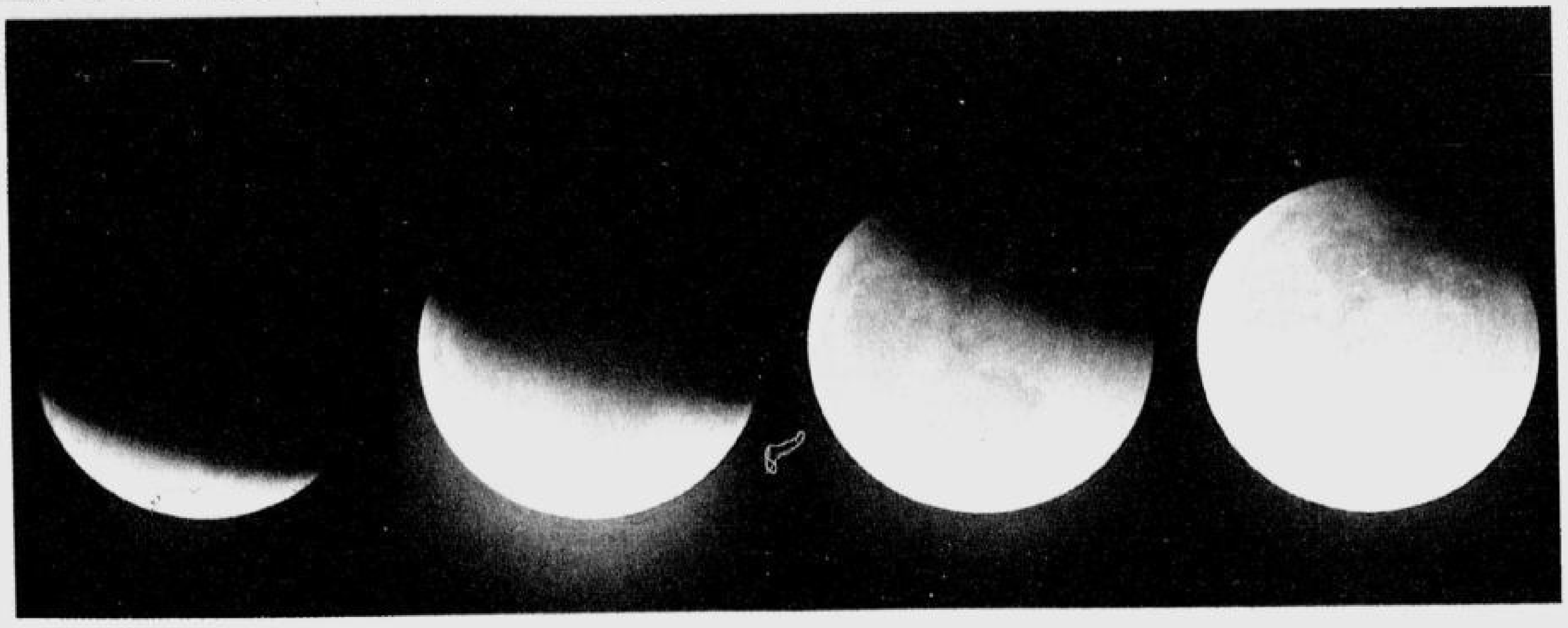

NOW YOU SEE IT . . .
The full moon emerges from darkness in this series of pictures of the lunar eclipse. The photos were taken early Tuesday night in the clear skies of Roseller T. Lim town, Zamboanga, Sibugay. In Metro Manila and elsewhere, clouds blocked the spectacular view. EDWIN BACASMAS

Lapus: NCAE a huge success

By Jerry E. Esplanada

EDUCATION SECRETARY JESLI A. LAPUS has described as a "huge success" last Tuesday's holding of the National Career Assessment Examinations or NCAE.

"Reports from all regions nationwide showed large turnouts despite earlier threats of a boycott by militant students," Lapus said yesterday, citing reports reaching the Department of Education main office in Pasig City.

Even so-called "Abu Sayyaf and Muslim rebel territories" like the island-province of Basilan reported huge student turnouts.

Last week, high school seniors belonging to the militant League of Filipino Students and Anakbayan threatened to boycott the tests.

Their threats, however, turned out to be a "dud," said DepEd officials.

'Black Duke' visits Manila

By Cynthia D. Balana

A WARSHIP WITH THE MOST NUMBER of battle honors in the British Fleet is in Manila this week to conduct joint military training exercises with the Philippine Navy, focusing on maritime security.

HMS Monmouth, a Type 23 Duke class frigate with nearly 200 officers and crew, is on a global deployment of about one year as part of a series of calls on major strategic partners. It is also scheduled to visit Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Japan, and Singapore.

Speaking after his arrival in Manila, Commanding Officer Tim Peacock, the ship captain and commander of the Royal Navy, said HMS Monmouth is one of the largest Royal Navy ships to visit Manila in many years.

Peacock said the visit "underlines the continuing importance of the Philippine-British military and strategic partnership."

He said : "I look forward to meeting the new secretary of defense and other senior members of the Philippine Armed Forces."

Peacock said he hoped HMS Monmouth, affectionately call the Black Duke, would undertake some maneuvers with the Philippine Navy before leaving the Philippines.

Welcoming HMS Monmouth was British Ambassador Peter Beckingham who said the visit gave an opportunity to re-enforce the close strategic interests of the Philippines and the United Kingdom, and to review training which has been provided by the UK to the Philippine Navy.

The ship's program included meetings with senior defense and government officials by Peacock of the Royal Navy, as well as a call on Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, August 30, 2007
21st Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: 1 Thes 3:7-13
Gospel: Matthew 24:42-51

Jesus said to his disciples, "Stay awake, then, for you do not know on what day your Lord will come. Just think about this: if the owner of the house knew that the thief would come by night around a certain hour, he would stay awake to prevent his house to be broken into. So, be alert, for the Son of Man will come at the hour you least expect.

"Imagine a capable servant whom his master has put in charge of his household to give them food at the proper time. Fortunate indeed is that servant whom his master will find at work when he comes. Truly, I say to you, his lord will entrust that one with everything he has.

"Not so with the bad servant who thinks: My master is delayed. And he begins ill-treating his fellow servants while eating and drinking with drunkards. But his master will come on the day he does not know and at the hour he least expects. He will dismiss that servant and deal with him as with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Commentary

Paul expresses his gratitude to the Thessalonians for all they have done for him and his fellow preachers and missionaries. Their standing firm in the Lord gives them heart. They are prayed for fervently night and day that Paul may have the chance to see them face to face and that God the Father will light the way to them. It is a prayer that we can say often for all the groups in our churches, in our nation, and the entire world that we may cling to the same hope and become holy—all of us.

We are to be prepared always, as servants awaiting the master's return. The Son of Man has entrusted us with his household and to dispense food to those in need: the bread of life, reconciliation, justice, peace, mercy. How we treat one another will be the basis of Jesus, the Son of Man's judgment upon us. Are we good, faithful, and watchful servants so that no one in the household lacks or wants for anything?

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NPA attacks feared; AFP goes on red alert

By Christine O. Avendaño and DJ Yap

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines went on red alert yesterday to thwart retaliatory attacks from communist rebels following the arrest of communist leader Jose Ma. Sison in the Netherlands on suspicion of ordering two of his former associates killed.

Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., AFP chief of staff, said there was no indication that the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), would launch major attacks but stressed the need for the military to be prepared just the same.

"You know, it's better to be on the cautious side rather than be sorry later," Esperon told reporters in a phone interview.

A red alert requires all military personnel and units to be restricted to camp and on standby alert.

The 7,000-strong NPA has been waging a Maoist rebellion against the government since 1969. It is classified as a foreign terrorist organization by the United States and the European Union.

Esperon said the military went on red alert also because President Macapagal-Arroyo would be away for a visit in Malaysia.

The move came after Dutch police on Tuesday arrested Sison, CPP founding chair, for allegedly giving orders from his residence in the Netherlands to have two of his former associates killed.

The two men, Arturo Tabara and Romulo Kintanar—who had split with Sison's CPP-NPA for ideological reasons—were gunned down in separate gangland-style attacks in 2003 and 2006.

In Malacañang, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales said the AFP and police top brass knew full well that enemies of the state would always take advantage of the situation.

"We are anticipating this kind of scenarios and we are prepared," he said.

The chief of the AFP National Capital Region Command (NCRCom), Maj. Gen. Ben. Dolorfino, said he expected the Left to launch protests in Metro Manila to protest the arrest of Sison.

As expected, militant groups sympathetic to the plight of Sison sought to express their indignation over his arrest at the Dutch Embassy yesterday in Makati City—but they could only go as far as the Ninoy Aquino statue.

Dozens of members of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Anakbayan, among other groups, trooped to Ayala Avenue at 10:30 a.m., intending to picket the Royal Netherlands Embassy on Paseo de Roxas Avenue.

But a line of some 50 policemen blocked their path, forcing the demonstrators to stage their protest in front of the Ninoy statue at the corner of Ayala and Paseo de Roxas. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Dutch envoy: There's basis to bring Joma to justice

From page A1

Kintanar and Tabara file their cases in the Netherlands where Sison has been living in self-exile for 20 years.

But Gonzales and Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis said that due to the absence of an extradition treaty with the Netherlands, the Philippine government would wait for the Dutch resolution of Sison's double murder case before moving to seek his return to the country.

Vornis refused to comment on reports that the Philippine government had a hand in the arrest of Sison.

"I understand that you want to put this decision to arrest Mr. Sison in the context of bilateral relations," the ambassador said.

Kristie Kenney, United States ambassador to the Philippines, reacted positively to the arrest of Sison.

"This is obviously a Philippine issue but as you know the NPA [New People's Army, armed wing of the CPP] is on our foreign terror organizations, so I commend the Philippines for continuing to try to keep its people safe and going after terrorists," Kenney said.

"As you know the United Nations, the European Union and the Philippines have all labeled the NPA a terrorist group ... we work very hard to prevent terrorist groups from getting financing and all our citizens safe," she said.

Dutch Penal Code

On PTV 4's "TeleDyaryo" program, Vornis said: "I should stress that we are looking here at a Dutch criminal investigation by the competent Dutch authorities leading to the arrest on charges that are being brought against Mr. Sison on the basis of the Dutch Penal Code."

"It is indeed a situation wherein charges are being brought against Mr. Sison on the basis of Dutch law. So, that in itself is an indication that there is a basis in Dutch law to bring charges against Sison," he said.

Vornis said he was not authorized and was not supposed to comment on the substantive part of the charges, only on what was indicated in the press statement.

Court hearing tomorrow

He said that Sison would be brought to the court in The Hague tomorrow for a remand hearing.

Under Dutch law, authorities have three to six days from the arrest to present the accused to the judge. The judge will then decide on whether there is a need to extend the detention for another 14 days.

If extended, a group of judges will decide after the 14-day period whether there is a need to extend it to a maximum of 90 days. After the 90-day period, the presentation of the case in the court begins.

Criminal investigation

"But I'd like to stress again that this is a Dutch criminal proceedings. Regardless of implications, it is the national prosecutor's office, an independent office in our system, that has decided to bring these charges against Mr. Sison after a long period during which a criminal investigation was conducted by the Dutch authorities," he said.

Vornis stressed that there was no extradition treaty between the Philippines and The Netherlands, which is a precondition to any extradition request.

He also said that the principle of extra-territoriality did not come into play at all in the Sison case. Extra-territoriality is the privilege of immunity from local law enforcement enjoyed by certain aliens in another country.

The Philippine Embassy would provide Sison assistance, including visits and the help of a lawyer, should he ask for one, Seguis said at the press conference.

Major breakthrough

In a statement, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Sison's arrest "is a major breakthrough in the quest for peace and justice shared by millions of Filipinos."

"This administration seeks an end to decades of armed struggle that has kept many rural areas inaccessible and thus, unprogressive. Joma Sison has much to answer for, and now the truth shall be known about atrocities committed in his behalf by those who stubbornly cling to an outdated and discredited ideology," Bunye said.

At the press conference, Gonzales said the Dutch authorities would try to establish that Sison was the CPP chair who ordered the killing of Leftist leaders in the Philippines. He said Sison had been denying that he was the CPP chair even if the whole country knew about it.

"'Is Armando Liwanag, Armando Guerrero and Joma Sison the same person?' We have to establish this legally," the national security adviser said. In CPP statements and documents, Armando Liwanag is mentioned as the CPP chair.

Year-long process

He said the arrest had been in the works for a year but the Dutch authorities had asked for confidentiality.

If asked by Dutch authorities, the Philippine government would provide the evidence, he said.

Dutch prosecutors asked for help before, according to Gonzales.

Dutch police came over and sought assistance from the International Police section of the National Bureau of Investigation in locating witnesses.

"They made several visits to the Philippines. They have interviewed a lot of possible witnesses to this case. This has been going on for many months," he said.

Case files, forensic evidence

At the Philippine National Police headquarters, PNP Deputy Director General Avelino Razon said Dutch authorities were in the country two years ago. Razon said the PNP furnished the Dutch with case files related to Sison's case, including documentary evidence consisting of testimonies and forensic evidence.

"Our evidence is strong and even meets the standards of the Netherlands authorities. In their assessment, there is probable cause," Razon told reporters.

He said Dutch authorities started to process the case against Sison in January 2006 and ended in July 2007. "That's how long their process is."

Razon said the PNP was willing to send police investigators to the Netherlands to testify against Sison if needed.

Freudian slip

Gonzales could not keep his elation over Sison's arrest.

"What I know is that it is against the Dutch law to order a murder in their soil. That's why I'm very excited. Sorry ... Freudian slip," he said, blushing.

Gonzales said the case had nothing to do with the peace talks.

"Of course, Joma is claiming to be a consultant to the peace process. That's well and good but let us not use the peace process to add color to the case," he said. *(See related story on Page A1.)*

Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza said the government would determine the effect of the arrest on the peace talks with the communist-led National Democratic Front, which bogged down since August 2004. *With a report from Allison W. Lopez*

NDF warns arrest to end peace talks, orders more strikes

From page A1

country's communist leadership ordered the guerrilla New People's Army (NPA) to strike more severe blows at government forces.

"All units of the New People's Army are tasked to continue carrying out tactical offensives nationwide in order to intensify the people's war [and bring it] to a new and higher level," the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) said in an e-mail statement.

The reactions followed the arrest of Sison in the Netherlands the other day on suspicion of ordering the murder of two former allies in the Philippines.

The NDF is an umbrella group of various underground organizations, including the CPP and its military wing, the NPA. The 7,000-strong rebel army has been waging a Maoist rebellion since 1969.

"The arrest of Professor Sison and the raids conducted (on NDF offices in the Netherlands) are bound to terminate the ongoing peace negotiations between the (NDF) and the Arroyo government," NDF monitoring committee chair Fidel Agcaoili said in the statement.

"The NDF negotiating panel will await instructions from the leadership of the revolutionary movement in the Philippines on the fate of the peace negotiations," the statement added.

Peace talks were suspended in 2004 after the rebels demanded they be stricken off from the terror lists of the European Union and the United States.

Sison's European lawyers are preparing to question Sison's arrest and save him from a long detention for a non-bailable crime.

"The European lawyers have described the incident as a politically biased persecution," Edre Olalia, legal consultant for the NDF joint monitoring committee, said in a press conference.

"Certainly, the European lawyers will question the legality of the arrest," Olalia said.

Sison, 68, is set to appear before a Hague court on Friday. His custody by the police is part of a pre-trial detention that could last from three days to 105 days, according to Olalia.

Breaking down doors

The Netherlands-based International Defend Committee gave details of what it said was the "Gestapo-style" arrest of Sison in the Dutch city of Utrecht.

The committee is an international solidarity group composed of Filipinos, Dutch, Belgians and other nationalities campaigning for the removal of Sison, the CPP and the NPA from the terror lists in Europe and the United States.

Citing information from Sison's wife, Julie, the committee said that "at around 9:30 a.m., the Dutch police in plainclothes ... broke down the front door" of the Sisons' residence without even bothering to knock, and ransacked the house.

"She (Julie) was reportedly asked to sit in one corner of their house while the police carted away their computers, documents, CDs, and other files. The search lasted until early evening," the committee said.

Joma 'tricked'

It claimed the police also tricked Sison to get him in custody.

It said Sison was arrested when he reported to the Utrecht police after getting an invitation from them supposedly in connection with a new information on a complaint he filed in 2001.

Citing accounts from a lawyer who accompanied Sison to the police station, the committee said Sison was asked to go to a room supposedly to be asked questions.

Detention at Hague

"After he was alone in the room, he was whisked away, without the knowledge of his lawyer, to the National Penitentiary in Scheveningen in The Hague, where he is now under detention," it said.

It said the raiding team, in some cases, "did not show any search warrant and forced their entry into houses by breaking the doors even if people were inside. In some of the houses that were raided, only minors were present."

Militants react

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo condemned the arrest and also warned it had a direct impact on efforts to revive the peace negotiations.

Ocampo and Rep. Teodoro Casiño, also of Bayan Muna, criticized the Dutch government for supposedly allowing itself to be used by the Arroyo administration to go after Sison.

"We are saddened that the Dutch authorities have allowed themselves to be used for this insidious plan to vilify Professor Sison and the (NDF) and scuttle the peace talks," Casiño said.

Other militants in Luzon, such as the fishermen's group Pamalakaya and the youth group Anakbayan, also denounced Sison's arrest.

Militant labor and overseas Filipino groups joined in condemning the arrest of Sison.

Leaders of the United Filipinos in Hong Kong (Unifil) and HK Defend staged a protest action outside the Netherlands Consulate in Central Hong Kong, bearing banners that said "Justice for Joma."

Some wore shirts with Sison's words: "A hero serves the people to his very last breath." *With reports from Jerome Aning and Blanche S. Rivera*

Kintanar widow: I can fly to The Hague to testify if needed

From page A1

killed by Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

Gloria "Joy" Jopson-Kintanar has blamed Sison for the murder of her husband, Romulo Kintanar, on Jan. 23, 2003. She and another widow, Veronica Tabara, filed complaints against Sison early last year that served as grounds for the arrest of the CPP founder in the Netherlands on Tuesday.

In another text message to the INQUIRER, Kintanar confirmed that she filed the murder charges against Sison in the Netherlands. She said she would fly to that country to give her testimony "if needed."

Sison has been living in self-exile in the Dutch city of Utrecht since 1982. He has been serving as political consultant of the CPP-led National Democratic Front in on-and-off peace talks with the Philippine government.

"For now, I can only say the following: I hope Joma is given due process, that the investigation will let the truth out, that justice be served," Kintanar said in her message.

Romulo Kintanar, a former member of the CPP's Central Committee and chief of its armed wing, the New People's Army, until his arrest in 1991, was shot dead inside a Japanese restaurant in Quezon City.

Directive from Sison

Tabara's husband Arturo, a former CPP chief in the Visayas, and son-in-law Stephen Ong were gunned down outside a mall in Quezon City on Sept. 26, 2004.

Both ex-CPP leaders had parted ways with Sison over ideological differences. The party has claimed responsibility for both killings, saying they were engaged in "criminal and counterrevolutionary activities."

In an affidavit she filed with the Department of Justice, Kintanar said her husband's murder was part of a "predetermined plan" by local communists "in compliance with a directive" from Sison who considered him a "threat" to the CPP and the NPA.

A senior security official said Kintanar was one of "several" people who were interviewed by a team of Dutch police and prosecutors who arrived in Manila early last year to look into the complaints she and Tabara filed.

Long process

"They talked to many people, witnesses, even Central Committee members, and they gathered documents. It has been a long process," the official said, speaking on condition that he will not be named.

According to the official, Sison's arrest was based on the report by the Dutch police and prosecutors that there was "probable cause" for the complaints.

But he said an "investigating judge" will have to determine whether Sison will face court trial in The Hague or in Manila. "The Philippine government will not ask for extradition, that is the decision of the courts in The Netherlands," he said.

An exception

The security official, who had studied the Dutch laws, said Sison's arrest was an "exception to the nationality theory," a legal provision that states that the Dutch courts can only hear cases against Dutch nationals or foreigners who commit crimes in The Netherlands.

"Apparently, they have a provision that allows the courts to hear cases against foreigners (living on Dutch soil) even if the crime was committed in another country," he said.

"Our concern now is not Joma but the safety of the two widows and the other witnesses who will be coming out," the official said.

Kintanar joined the CPP-NPA in 1977 and was assigned a research job for its Mindanao Commission. She held a position in the party's Finance Commission until she was arrested in 1991. She was released that same year on humanitarian grounds.

Personal knowledge

In separate affidavits, the two widows said they had "personal knowledge of the system and policies" of the CPP-NPA. They said Sison was the chair of the CPP Central Committee and was using the aliases "Amado Guerrero" and "Armando Liwanag." Sison has denied using the aliases.

Kintanar said she had "personal knowledge in the tactical operation of the CPP-NPA through its Special Operation Group and their modes of operation to eliminate/neutralize the uncooperative government officials and private individuals, including the killing of my husband who was wrongly, maliciously and unjustly judged as a counterrevolutionary."

"My husband was one of those who questioned the assumption of Sison as the chairman of the CPP/NPA/NDF even after he left the country," she said.

Sison, she said, was "jealous" of Kintanar who led the NPA when it reached its peak strength of 25,000 members in the late 1980s while Sison decided to stay abroad.

Tabara said Sison's anger toward her husband stemmed from an "internal debate" on strategy and tactics within the CPP in 1992. The debates, she said, led to a split between the pro-Sison "reaffirmists" and the anti-Sison "rejectionists." *With a report from Alcuin Papa*

Tañada not part of KL 'junket'

REP. LORENZO TAÑADA III OF Quezon clarified yesterday that he was not part of the delegation of Speaker Jose de Venecia who went to a "junket" in Malaysia last week.

In a press statement, Tañada said he was on an official mission in Kuala Lumpur to attend the Asian Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus lobbying for democracy in Burma. He said that contrary to reports, he travelled on economy class and did not receive $300 per diem. He added that it was the AIPMC, not the House of Representatives, which paid for his ticket.

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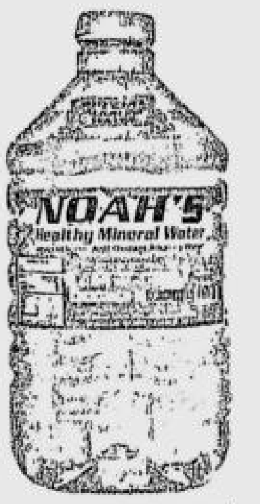

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HERE ARE SOME FEW TESTIMONIALS

"Starting first week of Jan 07. I feel very weak with back pain and experiencing intermittent high blood pressure. Most of time I just lied in bed and not working any job. I was diagnosed (CT scan) last June07 with TUMOR. Doctors prescribed 3 different medicine. Operation is necessary within 3 months or else it will more worse or die. Operation is expensive and no guaranty. I prayed a lot and someone suggested to try NOAH's Water from inventor Ismael Aviso. He suggested take daily 1 gallon of NOAH's, VIT C & Magnetic Bracelet therapy. The following day I feel strong and start to work in my Sari Sari Store. After 6 days no more taking expensive medicine and now I can make in one push up 20 times. Now I can lift/carry 50 Kilos bag of Rice. High Blood pressure and back pains disappeared. I am planning, within 60 days try CT scan again once my cash situation permit"
Bro. Paquito Reyes

" Severe Pain in walking needs assistance, due to my ATHRITIS (High URIC ACID) for 3 YEARS. I tried 7 Glass of NOAH's water and Magnetic Bracelet therapy. In less than 1 hour although its slow, but I able to walk with my own with less pain. Its 25 days now when I started taking NOAH's Water, I feel very good and 75 % pain disappeared." My URIC ACID is normal now.
Eng. R. Osorio

" Stones in my Gall Bladder and feel intermittent pain. ASAP need operation. After taking NOAH'S water in less than 10 days. Stone passed to my urinary tract and I saw many small probably stone in my urine. No more pain and I think no need operation."
B. Panganiban

" I am 21 years old. PIMPLES is my problem. I tried to wash my face with NOAH'S water, within two days it dried up and in 4 days disappeared including the oily surface.
Joan Panganiban

" I am 70 years old cannot walk, due to the following sickness Diabetic, High Blood pressure and Athritis 700 pesos a day medication. After taking NOAH'S water in less than two weeks, I start to walk with my own.
Lydia Wright

" I am experiencing intermittent FEVER for the last 7 days. 4 Doctors suspected a sign of DENGUE VIRUS, but still no conclusive Laboratory result of DENGUE. Doctor's advice I must stay in the Hospital. Someone suggested Ismael water. They said it has proven from several person with intermittent FEVER. I tried NOAH'S Water I consumed 1 gallon from 2pm up to the following day, early 3 am in the morning (total of 13 hours only) FEVER disappeared from 5am up to 10 am. I was out of the Hospital at 11am. Since then no more FEVER"
Archt. Felix Samora

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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
HAPPYCALL, INC. 12 San Sebastian St., New Intramuros Village, Commonwealth, Quezon City	Jung Gil Hwang	Manager
BRITISH EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION, INC 36th St. University Park, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City	Joanne Hiett	Teacher
INFORMATION PROFESSIONAL INC. 5/F Family Clinic Bldg., 1474 Ma. Clara St., Sampaloc, Manila	Nattaya Amponjan	Thai Consultant
TOP2U TECHNOLOGY PHILS., INC. 1401-1403 14/F Times Plaza Bldg., UN Ave. cor. Taft Ave., Ermita, Manila	Kang Soon Pang	Warehouse Manager
TOP2U TECHNOLOGY PHILS., INC. 1401-1403 14/F Times Plaza Bldg., UN Ave. cor. Taft Ave., Ermita, Manila	Hon Leong Leow	Marketing Manager
TOP2U TECHNOLOGY PHILS., INC. 1401-1403 14/F Times Plaza Bldg., UN Ave. cor. Taft Ave., Ermita, Manila	Tchul Tchul Chung	Admin Manager
PHIL-KO PARTY TRAVEL, INC. 926 Cityland Shaw Tower, St. Francis, Mandaluyong City	Eunyoung Choi	General Manager
PHIL-KO PARTY TRAVEL, INC. 926 Cityland Shaw Tower, St. Francis, Mandaluyong City	Younghee Ko (w/o LEE)	Supervisor
OPEN PINOY DOT COM CORP. Unit 101 G/F E-Square Bldg., 416 Ortigas Ave., Greenhills, San Juan City	Ho Chul Kim	Operations Manager
CONNECT88, INC. 28/F Yuchengco Tower I, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Huanhuan He	Technical Staff
CONNECT88, INC. 28/F Yuchengco Tower I, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Li Zhang	Technical Staff
CONNECT88, INC. 28/F Yuchengco Tower I, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Yan Liu	Technical Staff
WINSTONE LOGISTICS CO. INC. Unit 303 Heritage Condo., Dr. A. Vasquez St., Malate, Manila	Peiyu Shi	Assistant Manager
RAGA ONE2ONE CORP. 504 ALPAP II Bldg., Trade St. cor. Investment Drive, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Gi Young Pak (w/o LEE)	Customer Support Staff
ELIXIR GAMING TECHNOLOGY PHILIPPINES, INC. The Enterprise Center, Ayala Ave. cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Joseph Pisano	General Manager

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC-Regional Director

The DOLE-NCR will hold a Regional Consultation and Action Planning on August 30, 2007. Interested employers/companies and labor groups are invited to participate. You may call 3392016, 3035923 for more details.

(PDI - August 30, 2007)

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NOTICE

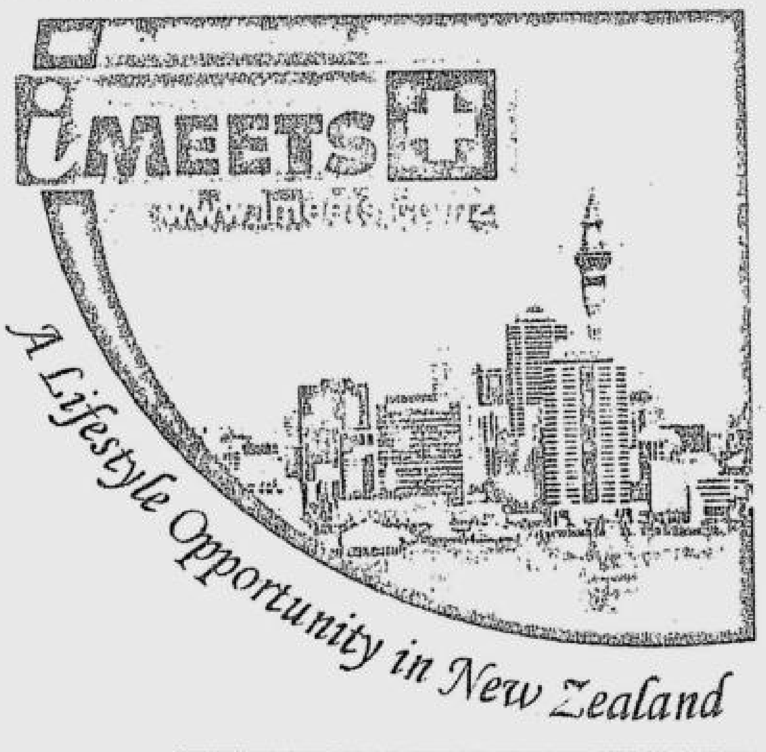
Notice is hereby given that **LUFTHANSA TECHNIK (PHILS.). INC. (LTPI)** with plant site at the Macro Asia – Special Economic Zone (MA-SEZ) has filed with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) an application for **PIONEER STATUS** to be granted to its Aircraft Overhaul based on newness of activity and technology, which if approved, will entitle the company to six (6) years of Income Tax Holiday. Said application has been officially accepted and is under process in this office.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file with the PEZA his/her objections in writing and under oath, within fifteen (15) days from the date of this publication.

Please direct your position papers/comments to the Enterprise Regulations Department of PEZA (Tel. Nos. 551-9544; and telefax 551-3456).

(Sgd.) **LILIA B. DE LIMA**
Director General

(PDI–August 30, 2007)



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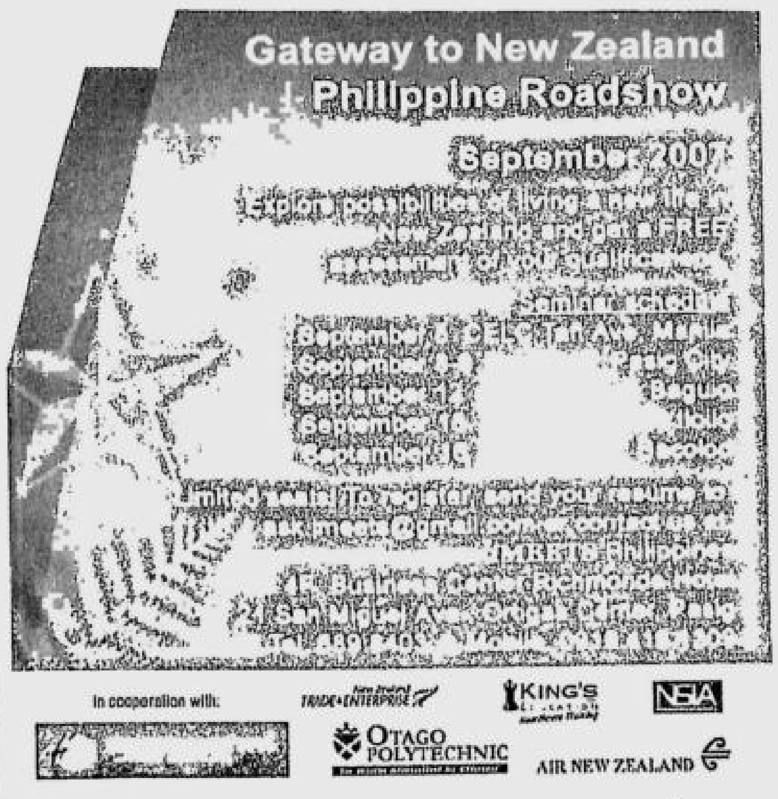

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DOTC ready to defend $329-M national broadband network project

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION and Communications (DOTC) said it was ready to defend the national broadband network (NBN) project in any court.

"We welcome the filing of any charges as we believe that the NBN matter should be resolved in a proper forum, which is the courts, and not through PR (press releases) and other grandstanding venues," Transportation Secretary Leandro R. Mendoza said in a statement.

Mendoza made the statement following reports that Nueva Viscaya Rep. Carlos Padilla filed charges against DOTC and Chinese officials. Padilla cited a case filed before the Supreme Court questioning the project

As for the case in the high court, Mendoza said, "We are now working with the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) to finalize our comments on the case."

The $329-million NBN project won by ZTE Corp. of China is one of the target beneficiaries of the $1.8-billion loan agreement between the Philippines and China.

Signed and sealed

The Philippine government and the Chinese Export-Import Bank signed the deal without fanfare on Saturday on the sidelines of the Asean Economic Ministers meeting at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati.

The NBN is envisioned to establish seamless connectivity of landline, cellular, and Internet services among all national government agencies or offices.

DOTC reckons the government will save P2.51 billion yearly from the NBN project set to be undertaken by ZTE, aside from enjoying a lower three-percent interest on the loan compared with a nine-percent interest on government bonds used to fund communications spending.

On Tuesday, Padilla lodged a complaint in the Office of the Ombudsman against Mendoza, Assistant Secretaries Lorenzo Formoso and Elmer Soneja, four officials of the Chinese state-run company ZTE Corp., and several others.

'Grossly disadvantageous'

Padilla said in his charge that transportation officials violated the anti-graft law and the Government Procurement Reform Act when they entered into a "grossly disadvantageous" broadband deal between the Philippines and ZTE.

"The NBN matter is now considered sub-judice, which means that the case is now in the hands of the court," Mendoza said.

Abalos may have played key role in NBN deal

From page A1

Padilla cited a column by Jarius Bondoc in the Philippine Star on an unnamed election official who reportedly negotiated the NBN deal while he played golf and had sex with women in Shenzhen.

"If this matter is investigated by the House, I suggest that this be made a required reading of the members of the House," Padilla said.

Abalos laughed off the allegation that he was the Comelec official who acted as a conduit between the government and ZTE to seal the NBN deal.

On the phone, he was full of mirth as he said: "I feel flattered. I didn't know I am that influential."

Abalos said he could not imagine himself as someone who could influence members of the Cabinet like Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, Trade Secretary Peter Favila and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Wishful thinking?

Abalos also heartily laughed when he said he "wished" he could be the person, who was mentioned in the newspaper column as someone with the "sexual prowess" to handle two women in one day.

"That would make my wife very happy. You know, I am not at all affected by these allegations. It's really laughable. One [partner] in the morning, and another in the evening?" he said, chuckling.

"At my age, I am already 73, why would I do that?" he added.

Ready to face probe

Nonetheless, Abalos said he would face whatever investigation Padilla or the House of Representatives would initiate.

On April 21, 2007, which was covered by the election period during which no government contract should be signed, Mendoza and Yu Yong, ZTE vice president, inked the $329-million deal in ceremonies witnessed by President Macapagal-Arroyo in Boao, China.

Asked if the ZTE contract was legal even if it was signed at the height of the election campaign, Abalos said it would have to be looked into.

"We can't immediately say if it's allowed or not because we don't even know if that is just an understanding or a contract. We have to see it first," he said.

Two other companies—Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI) and US-based Arescom—came up with proposals of $240 million and $135 million, respectively, to undertake the NBN project.

Padilla said the Filipino firm AHI submitted an unsolicited bid under the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Law to the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) but the offer was set aside "despite the fact that under the BOT Law, the agency concerned is mandated to review the BOT proposal within a fixed period."

E-Procurement Law violated?

Padilla said the E-Procurement Law was also violated because the award in favor of ZTE failed to go through an "honest-to-goodness" bidding process.

"There was no competition, no fight, nothing that would have ensured that the Filipino people will get the most of the taxes they are always constrained to cough up," he said.

Padilla said the representative of AHI, which proposed to undertake the NBN through the BOT scheme, was asked to withdraw its unsolicited proposal to the DOTC.

Unofficial trips

Padilla said that weeks before the ZTE-NBN deal was signed, Abalos traveled unofficially to China.

"According to sources, ZTE Corp. paid for the hotel accommodations of Abalos. It was then unclear why Abalos was traveling to China, why he was doing so unofficially, and why ZTE Corp. was apparently sponsoring his trips," the lawmaker said in his speech.

"On several occasions earlier this year, Chairman Abalos was also seen playing golf with officials of ZTE at a golf club in Mandaluyong City and in Shenzen, China. Obviously, this was more than a mere coincidence," he added.

Padilla said Assistant Secretary Lorenzo Formoso III of the DOTC made up the story about the ZTE-NBN contract getting lost with four other agreements signed in Boao.

He said Formoso made the claim before a round-table discussion at the Ateneo Professional Schools in Makati City.

"Probably taken aback by the reaction of those present ... (Formoso) almost immediately declared that there was no need to worry. He promised to make available copies of the reconstituted pertinent agreement," the lawmaker said.

Contrary statements

Contrary to Formoso's announcements, Padilla said Presidential Legal Adviser Sergio Apostol said the NBN project would not push through because there was no contract.

Favila, for his part, also said that what was signed in Boao was a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and not a contract with ZTE.

"The day after (Apostol's announcement) Mendoza and Formoso in an interview with the INQUIRER practically made liars of Favila and (Apostol) when they declared that an MOU and supply contract with regard to the NBN had, in fact, been executed between the government and ZTE," Padilla said.

Padilla noted that Mendoza and Formoso earlier said that the contract had been reconstituted.

"Mr. Mendoza and Mr. Formoso lied. The Department of Justice reviewed the transaction not the agreements," Padilla said.

Senate votes to reopen 'Garci'; probe by 3 committees

From page A1

The three committee chairs will meet on Monday to set the rules and date of hearings.

"This is a product of ping-pong diplomacy because it transferred [the probe] from Ping (Sen. Panfilo Lacson) to Pong (Biazon)," said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, who has maintained the opposition's stand to play the Garci tape during the probe.

Lacson, who initiated the revival of the investigation by introducing testimony by T/Sgt. Vidal Doble on the authenticity of the tape, expected the hearings to start next week.

"My original proposal was to carry this in Biazon's committee," said Lacson.

But the specter of the senators seeking Supreme Court intervention to stop the playing of the Garci tape at the hearings remained a possibility as administration senators maintained their stand.

"We will oppose any attempt to play any part of the Hello Garci tape in the hearings," said Sen. Miguel Zubiri.

Consensus was reached

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, who warned that the senators risked violating Republic Act No. 4200, or the Anti-Wiretapping Law, said that the decision was a consensus of the entire Senate.

Only Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and the jailed Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV were absent during the caucus.

Enrile refused to say whether it was a tactical victory for the administration since the confrontation on the Garci tape had been moved to another day and confined to only three committees.

"It would not look good for the Senate to be seen as in direct confrontation with the Executive," said Gordon, who added that the compromise would ensure that the Senate's work would not be hampered.

Electoral fraud

Cayetano concurred that the opposition agreed to tackle the issue at the joint committee level rather than as a whole in order to avert a confrontation with the administration.

"Anyway, all we wanted to do is continue the Hello Garci probe. With the inclusion of the committee on electoral reforms, we are sure that the electoral fraud would be included," said Cayetano.

But Gordon claimed that while electoral fraud could be covered, the senators could not use the Garci tape as evidence.

Santiago, who left before the caucus began, said that senators should discuss the issue among themselves to avoid a constitutional deadlock.

"I hope that we would not be led to a deadend by this agreement among us senators. I hope we could just reach a compromise," said Santiago.

She begged off from attending the caucus because she was feeling under the weather.

Don't impose restrictions

Santiago said that the hearing should only tackle wiretapping by the military and not the contents of the Hello Garci tape.

Pimentel said that if a case was filed with the Supreme Court, the Hello Garci hearings could be delayed by at least three months and this could dampen public interest in the case.

Both Pimentel and Lacson were adamant that the Garci tape be played.

"We cannot impose restrictions on committees, they cannot investigate with their hands tied, they should use all means at their disposal to dig the truth," said Lacson.

Bishops fail to heal split of 2 'Couples'; members confused

From page A1

closed-door meeting of top officials of the influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

Reyes spoke to CBCP News, the bishops' official publication whose report was posted on the CBCP website. Confirmation of the breakup of the CfC, which has more than a million members in 160 countries, was reported on the website.

Present in the meeting were CBCP President and Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Bishops Ramon Villena of Bayombong, Guillermo Afable of Digos, and Honesto Pacana, S.J. of Malaybalay, along with Reyes.

CfC and its splinter group Couples for Christ for Family and Life, were represented by their respective heads, Joe Tale and Frank Padilla. Padilla is one of the co-founders of CfC, established in 1981.

Antonio Meloto, who headed the CfC's flagship housing program Gawad Kalinga that reportedly was the root cause of the split, was absent. Last year, GK's program to build a nation without slums won for Meloto and the organization the Ramon Magsaysay Award—Asia's version of the Nobel Prize—for community leadership.

The 57-year-old Meloto has downplayed the rift, telling the INQUIRER over the weekend, "we are working more, talking less."

Why Padilla resigned

Tale became director of the CfC's council of elders after Padilla resigned in February, reportedly because of the concentration of the group's efforts and resources on GK, only one of CfC's several ministries.

Reyes, who also heads the CBCP Episcopal Commission on the Laity, said that Tale will look into allegations that GK "is veering away from the vision-mission statements of the Couples for Christ and several teachings of the Catholic Church."

GK defended

But the Antipolo bishop defended GK's links with government and other religions, saying that "there is nothing wrong" with these tie-ups as long as these are "guided by the Catholic Church's rules on ecumenism."

Reyes said that the Couples for Christ for Family and Life led by Padilla "is now recognized as a diocesan private association of the faithful in the Diocese of Antipolo." He said Padilla's group may go into other dioceses with the permission of the bishop of the place.

"It is for the bishop to decide whether to accept one or both in his area," Reyes told CBCPNews.

In interviews conducted by the INQUIRER, household heads in a Quezon City parish who directly handle member couples said it was not easy to choose whether to join the CfC, which still supports GK, or Padilla's CfC for Family and Life.

Fears for the grass roots

They spoke to the INQUIRER on condition of anonymity to avoid starting a rift at the CfC's grass-roots level.

"Who will be their caretaker? As members of CfC, we are committed to them. We cannot just leave them behind," said one household leader, who has been with the CfC for 14 years.

The household heads agreed with observations that GK has apparently veered away from its original thrust of evangelizing the poor.

"People knew about Gawad Kalinga as just building houses for the poor. But the truth is, the program is more than just about the homes. What's more important is the development of the people, improving their lives and their spirituality, helping them regain their self-respect," one of them said.

Evangelization remains thrust

The household heads said that under the GK program, CfC members would go to the depressed communities—most of the time knowing not a single soul—and try to evangelize.

"You try to change their ways little by little. You start by cleaning the estero, fixing their surroundings. At first, these people would just stare at you. Then they will help. Then you will see them start drinking inside their houses, instead of outside, and the children would learn how to *'mano'* and be courteous to their elders. Only then would we start building the houses," they said.

Moreover, they said, as GK and Meloto gained popularity, CfC was left behind.

Less members

The household heads noted that the CfC has been getting less membership, and they attributed it to the "weakening of the group's evangelization program."

"There's been suggestions that we go back to the basics because we have been focusing too much on our social ministries and programs. It has grown too big. They (CfC leaders) bit more than they could chew," one said.

They also expressed concern over the households they are handling, as they try to shield their members from the controversy lest these couples, especially those whose faith is still "weak" be disenchanted with the thrust of the Catholic lay organization.

One of the household heads said he had stopped his group's prayer meetings because he wanted to protect it from having to choose between the two CfC groups without a proper explanation from the elders.

In a letter to CfC members dated July 12, Reyes had warned that the division within the CfC would affect its parishes and dioceses.

The household heads said they are disappointed with the fact that the CfC's "spiritual leaders" are the ones in the middle of the fight.

Power grab?

They said to them, there appeared to be a "power grab" within the CfC after some elders ignored the advice of the bishops—Reyes, Lagdameo, and Bishop Socrates Villegas, who was said to represent Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, to seek a "win-win" situation and resolve the conflict.

Instead, one group went ahead with the election of the council of new elders, led by Tale, last June 22, three days before the CfC's 25th anniversary, they said.

"A leader must not only have authority, but also the ability to sacrifice for the sake of his members. He must also show obedience to the bishops," the household heads said.

But because their commitment is to strengthen the faith of Catholic families, the household heads say it would not matter to them whatever group they decide to join.

They remain hopeful that there would be light at the end of the tunnel.

'Queen of Mean' leaves $12M to dog

From page A1

from the late luxury hotelier and real estate billionaire's estate.

Helmsley left her beloved white Maltese, named Trouble, a US$12-million trust fund, according to her will, which was made public Tuesday in surrogate court.

She also left millions for her brother, Alvin Rosenthal, who was named to care for Trouble in her absence, as well as two of four grandchildren from her late son Jay Panzirer—so long as they visit their father's grave site once each calendar year.

Maltese millionaire

Otherwise, she wrote, neither would get a penny of the US$5 million she left for each.

Helmsley left nothing to two of Jay Panzirer's other children—Craig and Meegan Panzirer—for "reasons that are known to them," she wrote.

But no one made out better than Trouble, who once appeared in ads for the Helmsley Hotels, and lived up to her name by biting a housekeeper.

"I direct that when my dog, Trouble, dies, her remains shall be buried next to my remains in the Helmsley mausoleum," Helmsley wrote in her will.

$3M for tomb

The mausoleum, she ordered, must be "washed or steam-cleaned at least once a year." She left behind US$3 million for the upkeep of her final resting place in Westchester County, where she is buried with her husband, Harry Helmsley.

She also left her chauffeur, Nicholas Celea, US$100,000.

She ordered that cash from sales of the Helmsley's residences and belongings, reported to be worth billions, be sold and that the money be given to the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust.

Her longtime spokesperson, Howard Rubenstein, had no comment.

Helmsley died earlier this month at her Connecticut home. She became known as a symbol of 1980s greed and earned the nickname "the Queen of Mean" after her 1988 indictment and subsequent conviction for tax evasion. One employee had quoted her as snarling, "Only the little people pay taxes." AP

Imelda wants to go to China

IT SEEMS FORMER FIRST LADY IMELDA Marcos has never lost her appeal to political VIPs abroad.

The widow of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos has been invited by the governor of Jilin Province, China to grace the third Northeast Asia Investment and Trade Expo which will open on Sept. 2 in Jilin capital, Changchun.

And Marcos has taken the proposition as an opportunity to seek treatment by alternative medical procedures in China and Hong Kong for her eyes and knee problems.

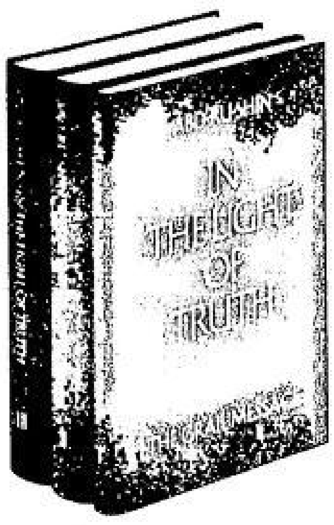
In a "very urgent" motion, she asked through her counsel, Robert Sison, the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division to grant her a two-week travel pass beginning Friday to attend the affair and see her doctors as well.

Marcos is being tried for 10 graft cases in connection to her alleged management of supposed five Marcos dummy foundations believed to have been used to hide $590 million of ill-gotten wealth from 1968 to 1971.

Jocelyn R. Uy

In the Light of Truth

The Grail Message by Ad-ru-shin



"In the Light of Truth", the Grail Message, is a classic work that offers clear and perceptive answers to questions which challenge every human being. Written by a German author between the years 1923 - 1938, it is a collection of 168 essays addressing all spheres of life ranging from God and the Universe to the Laws of Creation. It answers eternal questions such as:

What does it mean to be human ?

What is the purpose of life on Earth ?

What happens to "me" when I die ?

In this context, the author writes: "I wish to fill the gaps which so far have remain unanswered in the souls of men as burning questions, and which never leave any serious thinker in peace."

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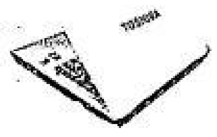

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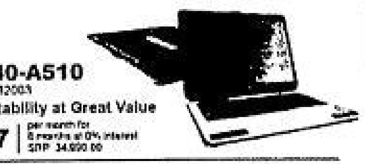

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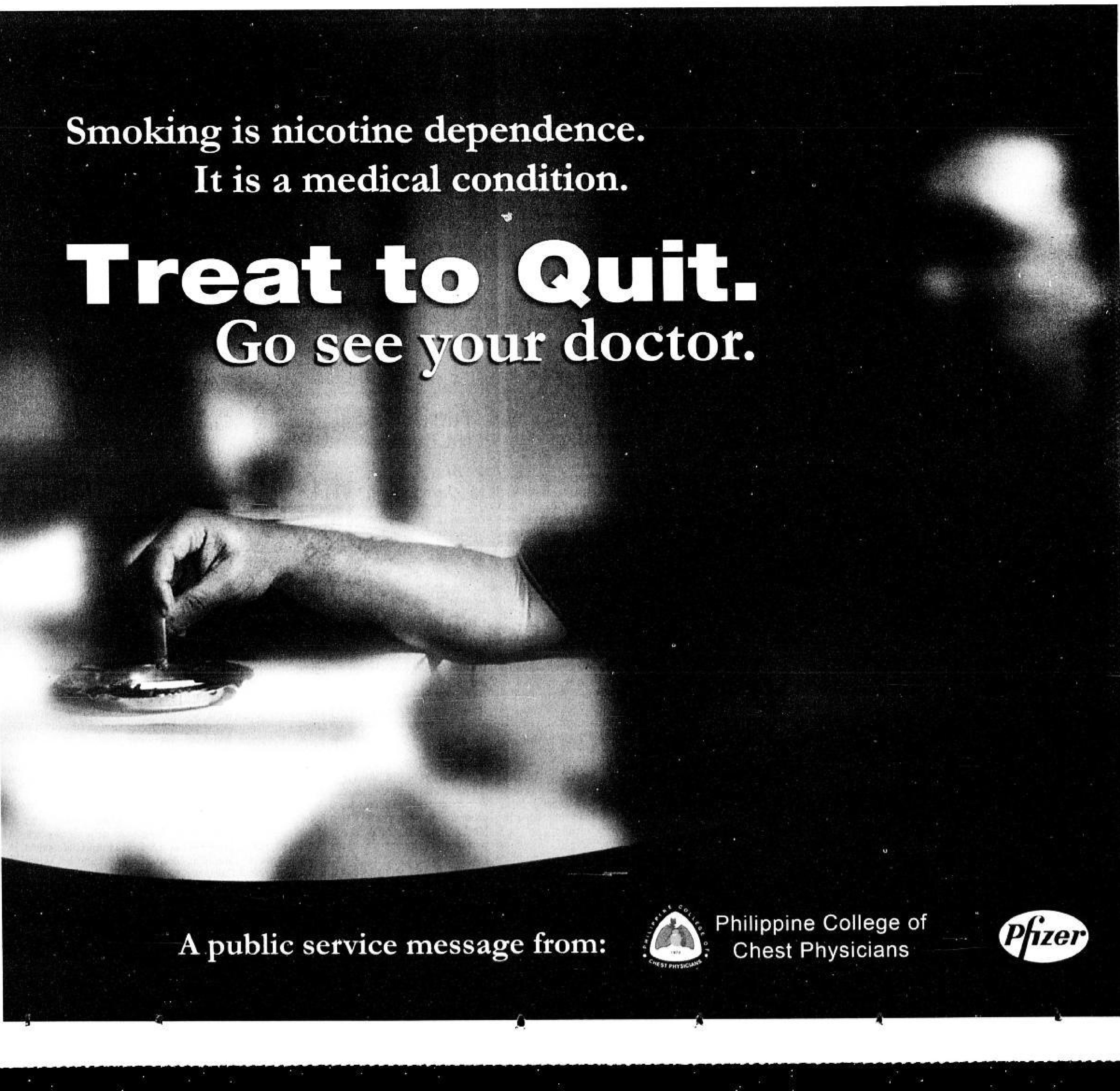
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OPINION

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Murphy's deal

EDITORIAL

WITH THE ZTE DEAL, EVERYTHING THAT CAN go wrong has gone wrong. Is it any wonder, if the lurid reports ultimately prove accurate, that a Commission on Elections official was actually involved in the deal?

The Comelec should have nothing to do with the ambitious but fatally flawed plan to construct a National Broadband Network—unless, that is, previous participation in another ambitious but fatally flawed computerization contract (think Mega Pacific) was a prerequisite. But, if the reports are accurate, the hiring of the election official to lobby for the contract was a masterstroke of cynicism: during an election period, the influence of election commissioners is second to none.

As it is, the entire NBN scandal has all the hallmarks of a Comelec project under the chairmanship of Benjamin Abalos.

Like the infamous claim of Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol, the scandal involves stolen documents. To be sure, the ZTE deal wasn't the only such contract stolen in Boao, China last April, hours after it was signed in the presence of President Macapagal-Arroyo. At least five other contracts were filched, too. But like Bedol, officials of the Department of Transportation and Communication waited an inordinately long time to report the alleged theft.

The scandal also features clueless government officials, in the mold of Abalos himself. The President's chief lawyer, Sergio Apostol, announced that there was, in fact, no contract. Transportation and Communication Secretary Leandro Mendoza, whose department will manage the network, kept a studied if embarrassed silence. And the Department of Justice ruled that the contract between ZTE and the Philippine government was valid—without, however, actually seeing a copy of the contract.

Like the Maguindanao recount, the scandal is marked by a thorough lack of transparency. The contract for the network mysteriously ballooned in the course of a few months, ending as a $330-million project. In the process, the competitive and in fact superior bids of two other companies were virtually ignored.

Above all, and like Abalos' oft-repeated claims of his commitment to clean and honest elections, the scandal involves a betrayal of the project's very objective. Instead of an infusion of foreign capital to produce a functioning network, we will get the opposite: an unnecessary and expensive piece of government infrastructure, paid for by Filipino taxpayers.

Last March, officials of ZTE, described in news releases then as China's largest listed telecommunications equipment provider, pledged (together with officials of another Chinese company) to invest heavily in the Philippines. "Officials of Pioneer Metals Group of Companies based in China and Hong Kong and ZTE Corp. ... told President Macapagal-Arroyo in separate calls in Malacañang of their intentions to invest here ..."

This notion of investment, however, has been stood on its head. A few days ago, the Philippine government took out a loan from China's Import-Export Bank, including a $400-million allocation for the National Broadband Network. What does this mean? It means ZTE is not in fact investing in the Philippines; it has bamboozled the Philippine government into taking out a loan from the Chinese government to fund ZTE's "investment."

Surely this "investment" is not what the President and her economic officials had in mind, when they discussed the need for a "privately funded government broadband network" in November 2006, and resolved that "the government connectivity and infrastructure should be developed at no cost, and with savings, to the national government."

For these or similar reasons, Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla has filed graft charges against Mendoza, two of his assistant secretaries, and at least four officials of ZTE, for violating anti-graft and government procurement laws. "The officials I have charged are liable for misleading the public and executing this anomalous contract and should be punished accordingly," Padilla said.

Let's hope Murphy's law, at work in this controversial deal at every stage, does not extend to the prosecution of Padilla's case.

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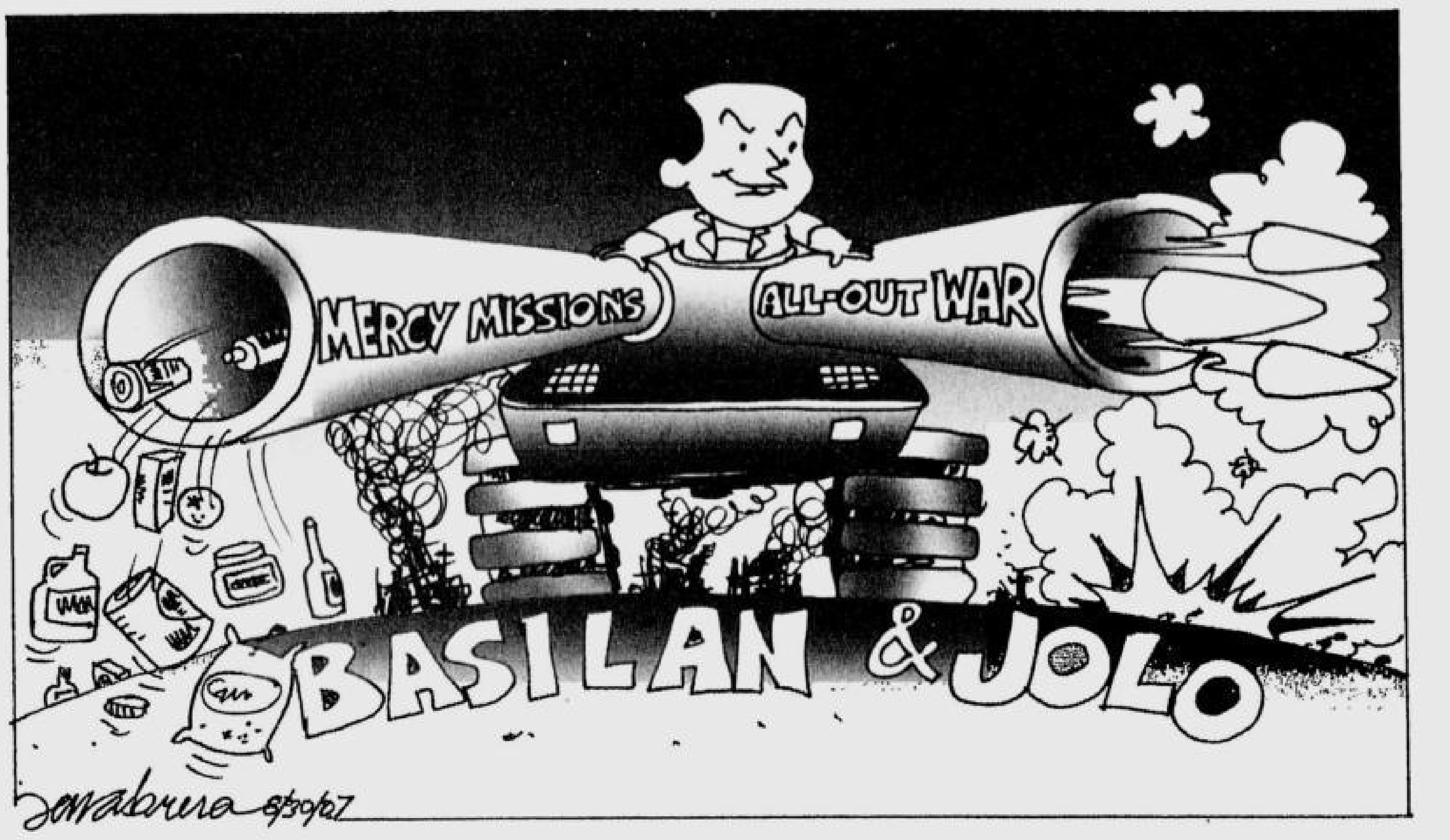


Talk back

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

READERS REACTED TO "VIEWPOINT" COLumns on our Latin-American-like spurts and busts in economic performance, water policy and lower House junketeers. Here are some comments.

"Your comparison of the Philippines with Latin America (was) interesting," Brazilian Ambassador Carlos Sette wrote. The column "Tough riddle," published last Aug. 2, presented University of Maryland professor Robert Nelson's study on the Philippine skid from mid-1950 pace-setter to tailender today. Did this stem from similar cultural patterns with Latin America? it asked

A second Nelson paper, reported in "Divergent paths" last Aug. 16, discussed how Japan and the Philippines went separate ways from a near-common starting point after World War II.

"Peru has been growing around 7 percent yearly, for many years," Sette stressed. "Argentina has been growing a hearty 9 percent since 2000. And the per capita income of Mexico is around $7,500. And Brazil is the 10th (largest) economy of the world with a GDP that exceeds $1 trillion. There are many other success stories in Latin America."

Indeed, those growth rates are true, I responded. "But Peru's maternal mortality rate for every 100,000 population is 410. Compare that to Thailand's 44. Argentina's life expectancy, at 74.3, is higher than the Philippines' 71—in Cebu and Pampanga. But both are below Hong Kong's 81.5. And infant mortality rate in Brazil, alas, is 32 per 1,000 births, just fractionally better than the Philippines'. Both are way behind South Korea's 5. After all, life is the threshold at which all other hopes begin."

"Yes, it is true, as Ambassador Sette notes, that some Latin American countries, including Peru and Argentina, have been growing in the 6 to 9 percent range for the past three or four years," Nelson wrote. "This does not include Brazil, by the way."

"This has been an unexpected and surprisingly good economic performance," Nelson added. "Interestingly enough, the same growth rates were experienced in the Philippines, and also somewhat unexpectedly. Once again, we find the Philippines and Latin America moving along parallel tracks."

"I enjoyed your column but find your anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish explanation for nonperformance of the Philippine economy unconvincing," e-mailed Jaime Manzano. "Better if (it) were more specific on policies that resulted in non-performance these heritages produced. For one, was it racially based limitations on opportunity? The Japanese benefited from being racially united? But they did continue a class-based society.

"What is it in Catholicity that makes for poor economic policies and performance? Spain seems to have overcome that problem these days. (*Ireland, too.*—JLM) Is it rejection of religion and totalitarianism? Spain seems to have bought into the competitive market economy, as well as the market of ideas...

"Economic mercantilism, pursued by colonial powers, has lingered. A bias in favor of Hispanic and American products, through market penetration and preference for investment instruments from these countries, held on until recently, specially with Japanese and Chinese (Hong Kong/Taiwan) capitalism. Old subsidies and quotas kept the powers-that-be from entering today's global competitive market.

"Japan aggressively sought external markets, even as 'loss leaders' in their planning. It even strengthened the peasant instinct to save. (Also) it fostered individual responsibility for meeting human needs.

"Witness Japanese social security. If I am not mistaken, it is a lump-sum payment at retirement age. Retirees tend to invest in small proprietary businesses that they operate. And 'large box' retailers were officially discouraged."

Carmela Ricaredo agrees that disaster looms for Cebu, given "reckless mining of the city's small, limited aquifers," noted in "Tutorial for us, dunces" last Aug. 28. "Is sabotage of the project to funnel surface water, from Carmen town, due to Mayor Tomas Osmeña's fury? That additional water won't serve his waterless South Reclamation Project."

Water shortages hobble marketing of Osmeña's SRP lots. But I'm not privy to what makes the mayor go ballistic. But it's a delusion to treat water as an infinite resource, stripped of "scarcity value." Economists note there is a "market blind spot for water"—depletion doesn't show up in national accounts. So, there is no early warning system. And only when riots erupt over dry wells do officials wake up.

"Through acts of commission and omission, policy can induce further stress on resources like water," observes the UN paper, "Sinking Aquifers—Who Pays the Price?" Governments today are "running down water resources. So, they fritter away assets to be inherited by future generations." To put it more bluntly, they act as if they have no grandchildren.

The column "Beatifying the crooks" last April 5 should have included "junkets by the House jet set documented by the Commission on Audit," Napoleon Ricamora wrote from Kidapawan, North Cotabato. In 2005, the COA listed the big spenders as: Antonio Cuenco with P1,294,058.05; Roque Ablan Jr., P1,014,006.90; Monico Puentevella, P960,789.66; Emilio Espinosa Jr., 806,904.43; Ernesto Nieva, P795,350.89; Juan Miguel Zubiri, P787,582.99; Abdullah Dimaporo, 777,886.88; Hermilando Mandanas, P741,777.65; and Reylina Nicolas, P731,196.50.

"Can we afford these bastards?" Ricamora asked.

* * *

E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com

Saint

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

A FRIEND OF MINE FROM ALMOST A LIFEtime ago, a poet and a priest, showed me the dilemma of priesthood, or indeed of religion in general, in a poem he wrote. The setting was the holiest moment at Mass when the priest holds up the host and chalice and proclaims to believers they are the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Except that in this case, the priest who does so is suddenly seized with doubt as to whether the miracle he is proclaiming is true or not. The moment stretches to eternity and takes on the aspect of an age-old battle between angels and demons.

I asked my friend if that had really happened to him or to someone he knew. He laughed and said it happened all the time, to priests and nuns above all because they're the ones who are forced to confront their faith as an occupational hazard. He merely chose the moment of the transubstantiation in his poem for dramatic effect, but most priests, like most faithful, are seized by doubt at some point in their lives. They have their dark nights of the soul. Priests go on to wonder whether they did right to give up everything—or at least vowed to, the part pertaining to celibacy and poverty not always being fulfilled—for nothing.

Faith, said my friend rather wisely, is the tension between doubt and certainty. You will never be completely certain there is a God, and you will never be completely convinced there isn't one. You truly make a leap or plunge in faith. Past doubt and short of certainty, you believe. Or choose to believe.

I remembered this rumination after reading that truly breathtaking, or awe-inspiring, news report about Mother Teresa, contrary to her image as walking with God on her side all her life, pretty much feeling his absence for most of it. In letters that she wrote to friends, she emitted the most agonized cries, like the shrieking of the wind in the desert: "Where is my Faith—even deep down right in there is nothing, but emptiness and darkness—My God—how painful is this unknown pain. I have no Faith—I dare not utter the words & thoughts that crowd in my heart—& make me suffer untold agony...."

And again: "When I try to raise my thoughts to Heaven—there is such convicting emptiness. I call, I cling, I want—and there is no One to answer—no One on Whom I can cling—no, no One. Alone."

That is incredible writing, pain and despair pouring out of every jagged line. Kind of reminds you of the characters of Graham Greene, the burnt-out cases who have lost faith, direction, meaning, but who by struggling to do the decent thing in a world grown indecent, by persevering to do the right thing in a world grown impervious to right and wrong, end up becoming the very arguments, the very embodiments, of faith, direction and meaning.

I don't know that Mother Teresa isn't all the more marvelous, or miraculous, for it. I agree completely with Rev. Richard McBrien who says, "This can only enhance her reputation as a saintly person with people who aren't easily impressed with pious stories." Certainly, this "new" Mother Teresa has infinitely better lessons to impart to us, Filipinos, a presumably deeply religious people whose religiousness has always been a little suspect. It says at the very least that people who do not suffer a crisis of faith do not really have much faith to suffer from.

Are we really deeply religious or are we merely resolutely escapist? Are we really full of belief or are we really full of bull? One can easily make a case for our religiosity being largely ritualistic: You go to Mass, you take the sacraments, you flagellate yourself on Good Friday, you visit the Vatican and kiss the Pope's ring, and you are saved. Notwithstanding that you rape, pillage and murder in-between. It is a religiosity that has to do with appeasing a vengeful God, not doing well by your fellow man.

Mother Teresa's saintliness had little to do with spending endless hours on the pews of a church searching for God, it had to do with spending endless hours in the streets of Calcutta searching for those God presumably created in His image and likeness but forgot about soon afterward, or so it would seem. Mother Teresa's saintliness had little to do with embracing the rosary and tending to the calluses on her worn knees, it had to do with embracing the skeletal frames of famished orphans and tending to the leprous, the dying, the damned occupants of earth's version of Dante's Inferno. Mother Teresa's saintliness had little to do with sighing, ah, but all this misery is God's will let's just accept it and move on, it had to do with trying as best one could to push it back however daunting the task, and crying out to heaven in moments of anguish and despair, as Christ himself cried out at the Cross: "Where are You, God? Why have You forsaken me?"

In Latin America, many of the priests who experienced the same dark night of the soul sought light in, or lit it with, the Theology of Liberation. Far from surrendering to Marx's cause, they merely surrendered to Christ's who said: "What you do for the least of your brethren, you do for me." Or far from upholding Lenin, they merely upheld Aesop who said: "Zeus helps those who help themselves." The priests of Latin America found their salvation in Medellin, Mother Teresa found her salvation in Calcutta. The priests of Latin America lost their faith in the smithy of struggle, Mother Teresa lost her faith in the bowels of wretchedness. The priests of Latin America found their God again in their struggle to transform their world and themselves, Mother Teresa found her God again in her striving to fill the famished bodies around her with food and the even more famished soul inside of her with laughter.

In my book, or any book worth reading, that makes her a certifiable saint.

Joma arrest demoralizes Left

THE ARREST OF COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE Philippines founding chair Jose Maria Sison in the Netherlands will doubtless demoralize the ranks of the New People's Army and its leftist sympathizers and allies. During the past many months, leftist groups have gone to town accusing the military of engaging in extrajudicial killings on leftist activists, but now Sison himself is being accused by his host government of having ordered the murder of two leftist associates, Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara, some years ago, after their widows filed charges against him. Sison, whose office was also raided, is scheduled to be indicted tomorrow at The Hague and trial will follow there, since the Philippines has no extradition treaty with the Netherlands.

Leftist militants immediately charged the Arroyo administration of pressuring Dutch authorities to arrest him, but this doesn't wash. Recall that the government has drawn severe criticisms from the European Union for its failure to curb extrajudicial killings, so it's difficult to see how it could "influence" or "pressure" the EU countries on the sensitive issue of Joma's arrest. Reports indicate that the Dutch authorities went to great lengths to investigate the widows' charges and decided that they were meritorious.

It's interesting that Joma's arrest came at a time when the police suddenly produced three supposed NPA witnesses who claim to have first-hand knowledge about how the NPA allegedly abducted Jonas Burgos. Timing or coincidence? Whatever it is, both events appear to buttress the military's claim that leftists have been carrying out the unexplained killings.

* * *

The nation awaits the Sandiganbayan ruling on the fate of former President Joseph Estrada in the plunder case against him. It's not clear when the decision would be handed down, but one thing's sure: there's no indication that a conviction will provoke widespread protests. Experts say that about P50 million a day is needed to whip up big crowds, and at best this can be sustained for only two days by Estrada or Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, said to be the opposition's main financier.

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

The same lack of interest could attend the new Garci hearings at the Senate with witness Vidal Doble. This is because he appears to be thoroughly discredited in the eyes of the people, who recall his admission that he had accepted P2 million from Estrada's mistress, Laarni Enriquez, to produce that tape, or that he sold a copy to former NBI deputy director Samuel Ong. Makati Rep. Teodoro "Teddyboy" Locsin Jr. has said that if the "Hello, Garci" controversy is to be reopened, Enriquez should be the first to be called as a possible instigator of the wiretapping. He said that one person who would like to see this happen would be former Sen. Loi Estrada.

* * *

A total of 184 exhibitors from all over Luzon held a very successful trade fair from Aug. 8 to 12 at the SM MegaMall under the One Town, One Product (OTOP) program of the Department of Trade and Industry. The fair, which was opened by Vice President Noli de Castro and closed by Presidential Management Staff chief Cerge Remonde, showcased some of the best wood, woven and bamboo handicrafts, stoneware products, food stuffs, fresh fruits and vegetables, fish, wines, etc. of Luzon. Many patrons felt that the products this year were superior to those of last year. Trade Undersecretary for Regional Operations Carissa Cruz-Evangelista, who oversees the program, said this year's fair earned for the happy exhibitors some P13.143 million, a 90 percent increase over last year's P6.9 million net sales. With OTOP pushing for better and better products each year and greater publicity, bigger incomes at the grass roots can be expected in the coming years. Orchids to OTOP.

* * *

The "new" First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo made his media debut last Friday evening over *lechon*, prawns, paella and durian at Mikey's Bar and Grill on Roxas Boulevard, owned by his son, Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo. "FG" looked trim and healthy and at least 10 years younger and more relaxed as he confessed to eating *lechon* for the first time since his heart surgery. "Don't tell GMA, but most especially Luli," he said, adding that his daughter is far stricter in watching over him. He recalled how he was given very little chance to live, even though at that moment he had no idea how bad his condition was. He later learned that his kids and even his personal physician, Dr. Juliet Gopez-Cervantes, were crying through the long night, but GMA remained calm and composed. He mentioned two "miracles" wrought by the healing priest from Canada, Fr. Fernando Suarez: his surgeon at St. Luke's Hospital, Dr. Rommel Cariño, found a small vein through which blood could be fed to his brain while the tear in his aorta was being repaired, and the revival of his kidney.

* * *

Arroyo admitted that his doctors had advised him to drop the libel cases against some media people and that he prayed "that God stop the anger I had felt." His more peaceful life now entails regular twice weekly therapy at St. Luke's and daily 30 minutes on the treadmill at the Palace, and he recently returned to his golf at Canlubang Country Club. He plans to join GMA on her state visit to Madrid in late November for which he insisted he won't need to bring a doctor, though he would need new coattails.

FG said he's now engrossed in several projects, among them financing the medical studies of 40 students at UP-PGH and Pamantasan ng Maynila; setting up a wellness and therapy center in Pansol, Laguna, for people from all walks of life; and raising funds to enable a surgical team led by Dr. Cariño to operate on those who have less in life. He's also helping to raise funds for our Philippine Olympic team which he plans to join in Beijing.

Good luck, FG.

Heroes on my mind

LIKE TINA TURNER SCREAMED, "WE DON'T need another heee-ro." Not another dead one, anyway.

But this month is for heroes, both the dead and the undead. And so we, the undead, had another round of the so-called "holiday economics" weekend. The newly dead are having their day, they are coming at us, hogging the headlines. Their message: "It is the soldier..." Their flag-draped coffins are continuously being marched before our eyes in very cinematic ways.

I play "Taps" on my mind and salute you all.

Strangely photogenic indeed are scenes of the heroic dead being brought to their resting places. Mourning becomes electric, as they say. The movies have unforgettable images of these. But even more awesome are the real-life scenes, choreographed procession, funeral dirge, riderless horse and all. But in the past millennium only one was Ghandi-an and only one was Ninoy-esque in scale and grandeur.

Terrifying are the funeral marches that cry to the heavens for vengeance, with protestors flailing the corpses of their heroes in a sea of grieving, raging humanity.

And heart-breaking are the ones held almost in secrecy or attended only by a few. Like Jesus'. Like the one of our lively guide in the wilderness where we spoke and broke bread with rebels and slept with armed women in a hut bristling with hand grenades and other deadly weapons. (That was many years ago, OK?) Soldiers caught up with his band, one day, and he took in the bullets so his comrades could slip away. A little candle in a darkened room was all he had, and a sister weeping, pointing to the rope marks on her brother's neck.

Such scenes are indeed awesome to behold, and the documentary and filmmakers have a way of turning the actual footage into cinematic moments that are hard to forget. How does one portray them later in images, in words and with music so that the rest of the world may share in the immensity of the loss and taste the rawness of the grief?

I remember watching the trailer of the documentary "Batas Militar" (directed by Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala). While it depicted the intensity of the military crackdown on those who opposed martial rule, it also showed the hapless foot soldiers who were killed in battle with the insurgents.

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

There was this scene of perforated bodies of soldiers being loaded onto trucks—in slow-mo—with Mozart's choral music "Ave Verum Corpus" swelling in the background. "*Cujus latus perforatum...*" It was awesome, but almost like a lullaby. Music and images drove home the devastating senselessness of Filipinos killing Filipinos, and I almost burst into tears.

Who the heroes, who the villains? Ask the Greek philosopher who asked the question.

That long-ago scene kept coming back these past bloody weeks that saw soldiers getting felled by the dozen in the battlefields of Basilan and Sulu, some of them beheaded by the enemies.

And speaking of another breed of heroes, albeit reluctant, the overseas Filipino workers, much-maligned by a *sosi* lifestyle writer of a glossy mag and a newspaper, didn't have to come home to exact their pound of flesh. The outrage created by that condescending and mocking article ("From Boracay to Greece") was tar and feather enough for the insensitive writer who has resigned.

Elementary good manners and right conduct as well as good values should have prevented anyone from expressing in public such condescending thoughts or from not thinking that way at all, even to oneself, of OFWs who are slaving away in foreign lands so that those they left behind could live a little better.

Tomorrow, Aug. 31, Father Ruben "Erps" Villote, founder of the Center for Migrant Youth, will be conferred the Mother Teresa Awards by the JCI. Here is a man of quiet heroism whose prayerful life continues to bear fruit in the lives of the least, the last and the lost.

Tomorrow, too, the 100th birth anniversary of the late President Ramon Magsaysay, seven Asians will join the roster of Asia's greats as RM Awardees in different categories.

We are not wanting in heroes. It's just that the media limelight chooses to linger longer on the garish lifestyle of the rich, famous and physically endowed. The quiet heroism of many remains unknown for a long time until it is discovered.

The RM Awards Foundation (RMAF) has made such heroism known these past 50 years by honoring selfless women and men who have contributed much in making this planet a great place to be. There are now eight volumes of "Great Men and Women of Asia" (say GMWA) published yearly by RMAF since four years ago and I am happy to say I have written a good number of the stories in the books. RMAF launched the eighth volume yesterday, with this year's awardees present.

The award-winning essays of students on their chosen Asian greats have also been published.

For an even much younger group is the 20-book series for children (illustrated, of course). It is "a gift of partnership" with RMAF from Bookmark and former Ambassador Bienvenido Tan Jr. who was RMAF chair twice.

Bantayog ng Mga Bayani also recently launched the book on the contemporary heroes and martyrs who poured out their lives during the dark years of martial rule. I personally knew a good number of them. And by the way, today is International Day of the Disappeared.

There is something about August—guns, upheavals, disasters, fires, eclipses, tides, deaths, martyrdom, the distant drums. And the birth and beginning of things sublime and amazing. We, the August-born Leos of this planet, ablaze with passion and prayer and infused with the music of the universe, revel in these.

* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Bluffing

MIRIAM DEFENSOR-SANTIAGO AND RICHARD Gordon are prepared to go to the Supreme Court to ask for a TRO. That is, if the Garci tapes end up being played in the Senate. The unsinkable Santiago warned her colleagues that they'd be liable for violating RA 4200, the Anti-Wiretapping Law, if they did such a thing.

But why just a TRO? If it authorized the playing of the tapes, she said, "the Senate would be an unwitting accessory to a crime." Unwitting? It seems the battle of wits, with Santiago, Enrile, Arroyo and Gordon being against, and the rest of the Senate, for, the investigation of the latest Hello, Garci-related revelations, runs the risk of the tapes being played.

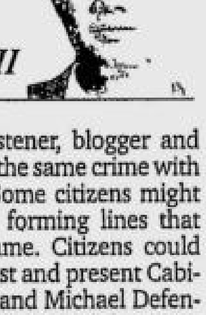
Sen. Panfilo Lacson should promptly play the tapes in open session, and provoke Santiago and Gordon into storming to the Supreme Court demanding not just a TRO, but the arrest of every senator who refused to leave the session hall at that point. Or Santiago, with the able-bodied Gordon's assistance, could wrestle Lacson to the ground, perform a citizen's arrest, thump anyone who objected on the head with the Senate's mace, and then go to the Supreme Court.

Then the Court would have to decide if Santiago and Gordon are right or wrong. If wrong, then Santiago et al. can look for other means to convince their colleagues of the error of their ways. If the Court upholds her, it justifies the arrest of the Senate (even Senators Lito Lapid and Bong Revilla, mind you, because, as Santiago would be the first to insist, ignorance of the law excuses no one). Having most of the Senate in jail would surely lead to dancing in the streets. The jailed senators, starting with Francis Escudero and Alan Peter Cayetano, could then petition the Court to order the arrest of the membership of the House of Representatives in the 13th Congress.

The congressmen, upon being hauled off to jail (at which point there would be massive public celebrations), could then petition for the arrest of most of Philippine media (at which point we would see the Mother of All Holiday Economics kick in). Media could petition for the arrest of every newspaper subscriber, TV viewer, radio listener, blogger and blog reader, for being a party to the same crime with which they're being charged. Some citizens might willingly line up to be jailed, forming lines that would put "Wowowee" to shame. Citizens could then petition for the arrest of past and present Cabinet officials like Ignacio Bunye and Michael Defensor, and the national joy and delirium at this point would be like the Second Coming of Christ.

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



At the end of it all, half of the country would be in jail, or waiting to fill jails yet to be built. At which point, the President could say the country has truly moved on, and receive a blessing from Cardinals Vidal and Rosales.

That is, if anyone really went ahead and called Santiago's bluff, which no one will. So, seriously, folks...

Santiago pointed out that our Bill of Rights says the privacy of communication is "inviolable" except if authorized by the courts, or when "public safety and order requires otherwise as prescribed by law." Otherwise, any evidence is "inadmissible for any purpose in any proceeding."

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile helpfully pointed out what is provided by the Anti-Wiretapping Law, which is the specific piece of legislation applicable to the Garci tapes. There is a blanket prohibition on wiretapping and the use of materials obtained from wiretapping, for any purpose, with some exceptions for specific offenses. Those exceptions, to be availed of, require permission from the courts to authorize a wiretapping, or to use the results of an illegal wiretap to prosecute the offenses the law lists.

He forgets that among the listed exceptions is the crime of kidnapping. Yvonne Chua on Aug. 5, 2005, pointed out that "Renato Magbutay... Comelec director for ARMM until the Gloriagate broke, is believed to be the 'Boy' who discussed with Garcillano on June 5, 2004 the kidnapping of Rashma Hali, election officer in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan. Hali had voluntarily made an affidavit on the poll fraud allegedly perpetrated in the town."

Enrile also overlooks the long-standing argument that the legal prohibition kicks in when the victims of an illegal wiretap come forward and say they never authorized the use of any such recording. He can well remember how President Ferdinand Marcos was victimized by an alleged recording of himself and Dovie Beams. It was worse than the Garci tapes because what was recorded was an absolutely private act, while the Garci tapes cover conversations entirely devoted to political matters. Marcos didn't invoke the law, because to do so, after it was passed around, would have authenticated it and added to his humiliation.

Raul Gonzalez proposed authenticating the tapes, since no one had admitted they'd been recorded. Michael Defensor even commissioned a study by Barry Dickey of two tracks from the Alan Paguia (edited) version of the controversial tapes. When Dickey's finding proved too nuanced (and welcoming of further analysis) to be politically helpful, Defensor then brought in Jonathan Tiongco (who died in a car crash last June) as an audio expert in November 2005. That's when Defensor (in)famously said, "It is the voice of the President but that is not the President talking."

These administration officials validate Escudero's argument (which led to Santiago's huffing refusal to be interpellated further) that too many assumptions are being made about the tapes. The victims themselves haven't even invoked the law. The tapes haven't been authenticated.

This is all very interesting. I myself care less about the content of the tapes themselves, and more about the Nixon-style cover-up that ensued. That's enough basis to conclude the administration has lost its legitimacy.

From a distance

OLD PEOPLE FREELY COMING IN AND OUT OF OUR house. The smell of cigarette smoke. The sound of small ivory blocks sliding over a sheet of pad paper or banging on each other. Our privacy gone. These were the sights, sounds and smell of our everyday lives since my grandparents came home from the Unite States. And up to now, I still cannot understand how my grandmother, who is a devout Catholic, can allow gambling inside her house.

My grandfather left for the United States in search of greener pastures 15 years ago. My grandmother followed him shortly afterwards. My parents had the impression that they would stay there for good.

YOUNG BLOOD

Paolo Luis Montecillo

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

My grandparents are good people. My grandpa is a retired policeman who still uses his badge to get out of trouble and my grandma has her *masungit* moments, but they are really good deep down in their hearts. And they are especially kind to us, their grandchildren.

But they have always had a gambling problem. I have heard my grandfather say a number of times that if he never went to casinos, they would have been millionaires. My grandmother, who holds a high position in our parish, cannot resist the call of the mahjong table. She only stops playing during the 40 days of Lent. We had thought that they would kiss gambling goodbye the moment they set foot in California, but we were wrong.

Three years ago, we found ourselves fetching them both from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Though no one said anything, we knew what was coming. Soon enough, tables were being set up in our house and the phone was ringing like crazy early in the morning as people called up to confirm their attendance. On the dot, at 1 p.m., they would be there.

Everything changed after our grandparents' arrival. Our loyal house help only lasted six more months before being sent away because they couldn't get along well with my grandparents. My dad had stopped smoking a few months earlier. But just when we were getting used to living in a smoke-free environment, we had to take out all the ashtrays because our visitors needed them for their cigarettes.

After a while, my parents were reluctant to come home anymore. They would play badminton or go to the gym or go drinking till the wee hours of the morning so they wouldn't have to stay in our house.

My siblings and I didn't really mind too much if they weren't home. For our own reasons, sometimes we were even glad that they weren't. But we could see that our grandparents' return had become a burden to them. My dad didn't want his in-laws lording it over the house; he wanted to be king in his own home. My mom had no choice: they were her parents, so what could she do?

It was not as if our parents were fighting each other all the time. But when they did fight, it was always about the same thing: our extended family. They did agree on a lot of things about my grandparents though.

My grandpa woke up at 4 a.m. every day. While the whole world slept, he would turn on the radio and tune in to the worst radio stations, where the music was bad and the deejays were even worse. Considering that the radio was just one thin wall away from where my dad and mom slept, you can just imagine how irritating this was for them. Small things like this slowly got into my parents' nerves.

I guess having parents in the house when you're trying to raise a family of your own is hard. First, my parents had to worry about feeding us. Then, there were my grandparents raising the electrical, phone, water and other bills. Sometimes my mom and dad would take their anger out on us children.

My brother, my sister and I got used to it eventually. But we could see the toll the situation was taking on our parents. It was stressful for them individually, and it was straining their relationship as well. And we knew it was only a matter of time before they both erupted.

Their biggest problem was the rising household expenses. At first, my parents thought they could manage it. But they did expect to shoulder everything, including my grandpa's impulsive spending splurges.

Then there was grandma's weird selection of home cooked meals. She would cook for everyone, but no one ate what she had prepared.

Finally, may parents made the decision to move out. When they popped the news, my grandma understood, but my grandpa resisted it. "Why move?" he demanded to know. "This is your house!"

All we had to do was wait for them to die and the house was ours. But then my grandparents were as healthy as ever and at the rate things were going, no one was betting who'd go first, my dad or they.

Eventually, we were able to convince grandpa and grandma that we had to have our own space, about two kilometers away. Now, we live in a nice, if smaller, house away from my grandparents. Our family still isn't perfect, but life has become more comfortable since we moved.

We love our grandparents. We can look beyond their gambling and shouting and irrational reasoning, and see the good in them. But we can best observe their good traits from a distance.

Paolo Luis Montecillo, 19, is an AB Journalism senior at the University of Santo Tomas.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Heroes

"People see me as a hero, but I am not. My heroes are all those slain soldiers who tried their best to save the rest. My appeal to our government is to bestow on them the highest awards because they deserve it more than I do."

—2nd Lt. Maria Rowena Muyuela, one of the survivors of the ambush on Marines looking for kidnapped Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi in Basilan

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LETTERS

Oh no, not again!

"I HAVE A PEACE TO WIN" GLORIA MACAPAGAL-Arroyo declared, at the same time assailing the "titans of hate, politics of destruction." (INQUIRER, 8/23/07)

What did she mean? (She made the statement in reaction to Sen. Panfilo Lacson's call for a Senate investigation into the Hello Garci tapes.) That there is a law that deprives the public of the right to know the truth? What if the wiretapped conversation would reveal the real mastermind of Ninoy Aquino's assassination?

Some people are using the law in a wrong way. Laws are made to uphold people's rights, not to deprive people of those rights.

We just want to know the truth. We don't want another "unopened envelope." That's the problem with the people in power, they are fond of withholding the truth.

—EDEL ANIT, eanit@yahoo.com

Gaps in Evangelista's column on overpopulation

PATRICIA EVANGELISTA'S PIECE IN THE INQUIRER's Aug. 26 issue left a number of gaps that need to be filled. I hope she will not mind getting help.

1. Gloria Junio's family of 22 live children (from an original 26) was never a typical Filipino family at any time. The National Statistics Office (NSO) says married Filipino couples today produce an average of 3.5 children. And the rate continues to go down.

2. We are never 88 million all together, at any given time. An estimated 8.2 million to 12 million work overseas; "the great economic stabilizers," they remit $12 billion to $15 billion every year. The monthly out-migration rate continues to rise.

3. A ballooning birth rate? The government says it's 2.36 percent, but international monitoring agencies say it's 1.8 percent to 1.98 percent. Outside of Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog, where the economic zones are pulling in labor from outside, and the ARMM, where religion plays a dominant role, the average growth rate, says the NSO, is 1.9 percent. But people are living longer, so the total is not dwindling despite the decline in new arrivals.

4. Overpopulated? Vast tracks of land all over the country are uninhabited, idle and unproductive, while Metro Manila and the urban centers are congested. Is this overpopulation or maldistribution? Are people the problem, or is it governance?

Many countries that have "contracepted" themselves to negative birth rates are now trying to reverse their population policies, to no avail. The thesis of far-seeing economists like Nobel Prize winner Gary Becker and Julian Simon—that "human capital" is the world's most important resource—is being confirmed. It would be a great pity if we miss this point.

5. Are maternal deaths related to abortion due to lack of access to contraceptives? Abortion remains a major cause of maternal deaths in the United States despite its being legal. Teenage pregnancies also remain high, despite the fact that sex education and contraceptives are accessible to children. The places where teen pregnancies have declined are those where the young practice continence, not contraception.

6. Rising (7.4 percent) unemployment? There is work for the qualified, but there is a wide gap between the jobs and the skills available. We need proper training and planning.

7. If government listens to the Church on contraception (although I doubt that it does), is it wrong? The right to life is an intrinsic and fundamental human right beyond the authority of the state to pass upon. It is not an invention of the Church. It belongs to man as man. There is no space for an extended discussion here. But this is a settled issue in the Constitution. An attentive reading of the Constitution will make it clear that the fundamental law does not support either contraception or abortion. All the government has to do is follow the Constitution. It also must listen to the World Health Organization which says pills, the most widely used contraceptive, cause cancer—and therefore, kill.

—MA. FENNY C. TATAD,
Women of Asia for Development
and Empowerment, Quezon City

Customs' auction procedures flawed

BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT'S RECENT RIDICULOUS decision to destroy smuggled vehicles was the reason that if the vehicles were just auctioned off, they would surely still end up with the smugglers.

If that's the case, then something is wrong with the government's auction procedures.

Besides, how could wrecking those vehicles strengthen government's drive against smuggling?

—ROBERTO TOBIAS,
junetob@yahoo.com

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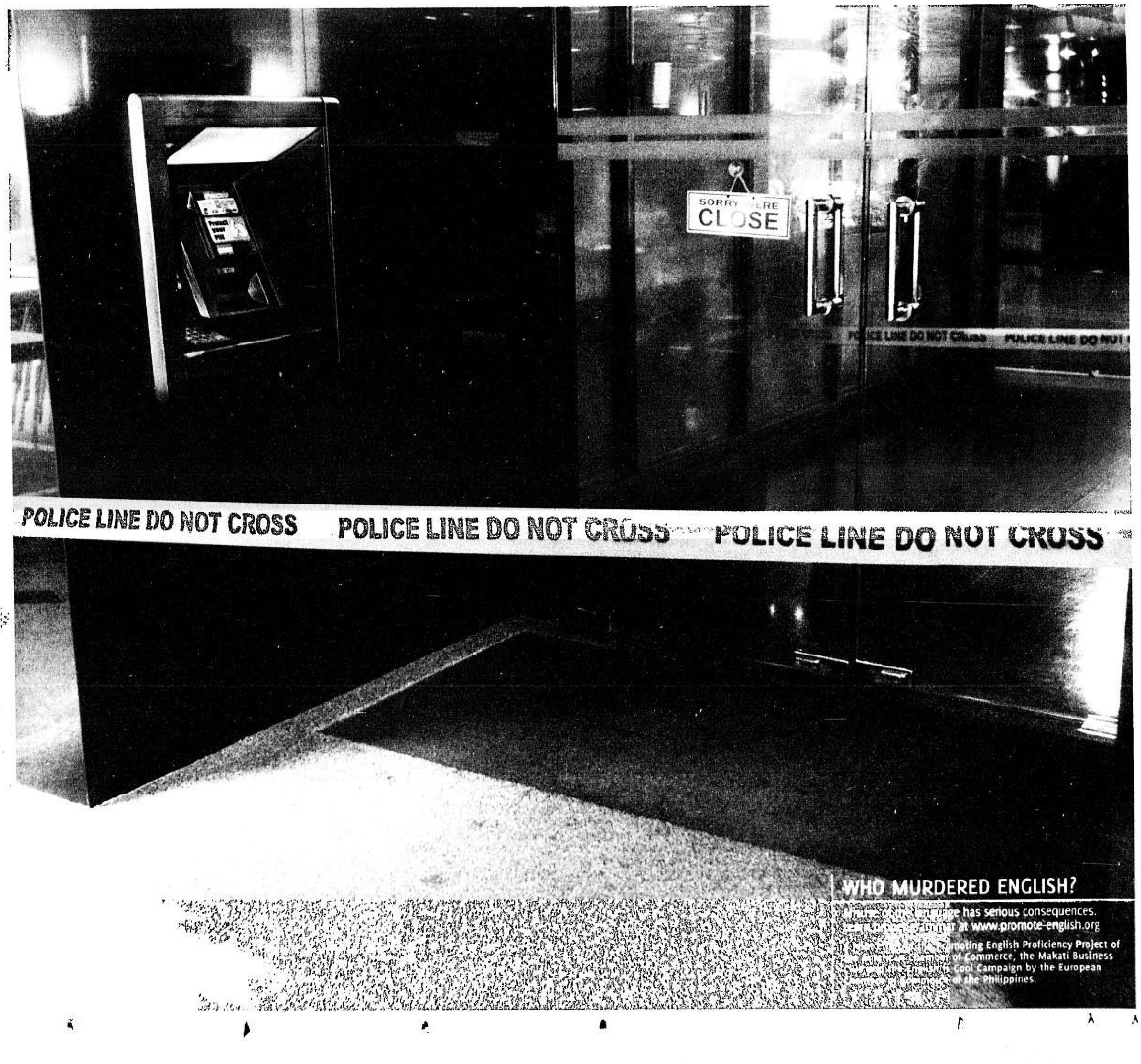

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Gov't loses ₱2M daily to oil smuggling

By Ansbert Joaquin
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—THE GOVERNMENT is losing P2.2 million daily to oil smuggling. In the last seven months, it lost a total of P470 million.

This was revealed on Wednesday by Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Administrator Armand Arreza, who said that sheer volume (of reported oil importation) gave a SBMA business locator away.

"It has come to our attention that this company brought in 193 million liters of oil over a seven-month period. When we checked based on official SBMA and Bureau of Customs audit report 127 million liters of oil are unliquidated," he said.

"Meaning, what we know is that (currently) they have an inventory of about 50 million liters of oil, where are the others?" he asked.

Arreza said the SBMA audit of the companies was done annually under a customs administrative order.

In the case of the locator, the SBMA received an advance report from the BoC showing that it only paid P20 million in taxes, he said.

Measly sum

From receipt of that report, he said the SBMA worked back to see if the company could liquidate 193 million liters.

"That is when we conducted a full scale audit and we've seen several discrepancies. So Antonio Villar (head of the Presidential Anti Smuggling Group) filed cases against them," Arreza said during a press briefing on Wednesday.

"When a truck loaded oil at the tank farm and went out of Subic that is smuggling. Isn't it? If they have not paid any taxes, that is smuggling," he said.

He also said 5,498 trucks loaded at the tank farm in a span of seven months.

12 million liters

"How could that be? How did that happen?" he asked.

Arreza said material balances reconciliation from the company managing the tank farm showed that in December last year, 514 trucks loaded 12 million liters of diesel.

Officials of the SBMA locator claimed in their liquidation report that they sold two million liters to Asian International Auctioneer, a vehicle importer here in Subic, according to Arreza.

He said they wrote AIA to confirm. AIA replied that it "did not purchase any diesel fuel or gasoline" from the Subic locator.

He said an SBMA audit has placed the volume of unliquidated oil at 138 million liters.

"At P3.30 in tax per liter, the figure would reach P472 million," he said. "And if there is an element of fraud, you multiply that amount by eight as penalty and that would reach P3.2 billion."

Arreza said the SBMA has suspended the importation of the Subic locator and withheld its inventory of 51 million liters of diesel worth P1.7 billion in a tank farm in Subic.

Smuggling bases

"The SBMA is withholding the inventory precisely because if the company is found to have defrauded the government and fails to pay P3 billion, then its stock (of oil) goes to the government," he said.

Villar's task force was also investigating the smuggling of cars through the Subic and Clark economic zones.

Several luxury vehicles and sports utility vehicles that were believed smuggled through Subic were destroyed recently in a move that the government hoped would discourage smuggling.

WAR TOY
EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON
Children play around an armored personnel carrier in Kalinga. The military and police in northern provinces were put on high alert for communist attacks following the arrest of communist leader Jose Ma. Sison in The Netherlands on murder charges.

Gov't alloting ₱10B for jatropha planting

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—THE government is setting aside more than P10 billion for the cultivation of *Jatropha carcus* in Northern Mindanao as alternative source of clean fuel.

Gilda Pico, president of the Land Bank of the Philippines, said during Monday's forum with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Talakag, Bukidnon that the funds would be loaned out to rural farmers of jatropha.

Talakag hosts a demo farm for jatropha cultivation.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said it allocated P2.2 billion for reforestation of barren and uncultivated lands that would be used for jatropha production.

Ms Arroyo said the government's support for jatropha cultivation was also part of its reforestation program.

"If we want to transform reforestation from a fad to a mass movement, then we must demonstrate that income can be derived from altruism. The green version of the gold rush is only possible if people equate tree planting as placing time deposit with short maturity and shared yield," she said.

The rising prices of oil in the world market have prompted the government to find alternative sources that can be developed. These included fuel additives from sugarcane and jatropha.

Bukidnon Gov. Jose Zubiri said that in the province alone, at least 60,000 hectares of land could be used for jatropha planting.

Philippine National Oil Co.'s Alternative Fuels Corp. said that in Mindanao, at least 700,000 ha could be used for the cultivation of the plant.

AFC officials announced that a jatropha processing plant would be built in the Phividec Estates in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, in 2009.

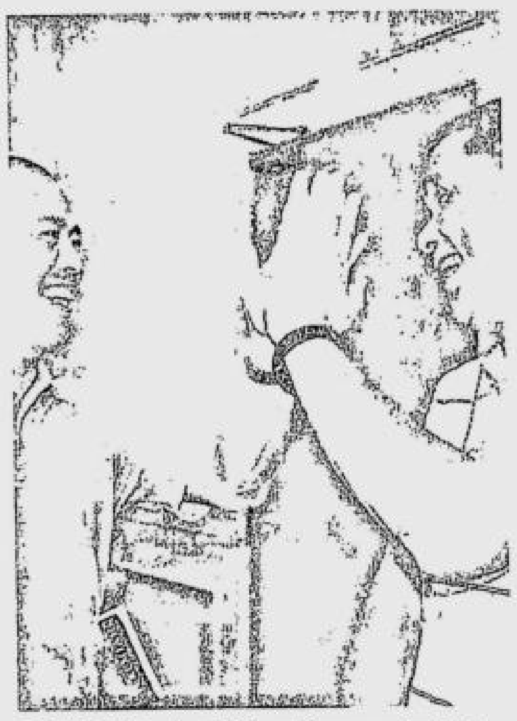
The plant, they said, could produce at least 1 million tons of biodiesel. *Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez, Inquirer Mindanao*

2 priests reunite for bid on 'activism' in Pampanga

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer C. Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Roman Catholic Church's unusual duo—activist priest Robert Reyes and priest-turned-governor Eddie Panlilio—reunited here on Wednesday for another joint endeavor: Activism within local government.

Standing next to a five-foot tall image of the Our Lady of Miraculous Medal, Reyes, 52, and Panlilio, 53, embraced tight, exchanged high fives and pleasantries, and shared laughter before going into a dialogue on what Reyes called his group Kubol ng Pag-asa's "long-term engagement in Pampanga."



CATHOLIC priest Robert Reyes and priest-governor Eddie Panlilio exchange high fives upon meeting at Panlilio's office in Pampanga. TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

"*Ang babae sa buhay namin* (The woman in our lives)," Reyes said of the Blessed Virgin Mary then standing at the capitol's lobby. Panlilio bowed his head in agreement.

Together on the way to the governor's office, they accompanied the image, a gift from Asuncion Leetai Pavia.

Pavia, 93, is a great, great-granddaughter of Fr. Mariano Gomez, one of the three martyrs of secular Filipinism. She's elder sister to Fr. Antonio Leetai, the first Filipino rector of the San Jose Seminary of the Society of Jesus.

The image was the 10th she has commissioned from out of her P5,000 monthly pension as a spouse of a World War II veteran.

Pavia's granddaughter, Plock-lick, 32, said she believed that the "Blessed Virgin Mary really wanted to go to Father Ed."

The image did not have a beneficiary until Reyes, fresh from a six-day leave from a teaching stint in China, came over the weekend to the Pavia house, accidentally.

"I got lost on Project 4 (Quezon City) while looking for a friend so I decided to drop by the Pavia home. And Lola Dahl (Pavia) was looking for a recipient. I pointed to Father Ed," he related of how the image finally landed at the governor's office.

The sixth replica went to Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca in 2004, Plock-lick said. The others went to poor communities in Tanay in Rizal, San Juan in Ilocos Sur, General Nakar in Quezon, Pulilan in Bulacan, Quezon City and to the Cin Foundation promoting environmental protection.

Pavia gave the image to "provide [its recipients] strength and guidance toward promoting a regime of peace and prosperity in the province."

Reyes said Pavia's aim was what the Pampanga journey was about.

To help in Panlilio's crusade for good governance, his strongest pitch during the May 14 elections, Kubol ng Pag-asa (Tent of Hope) was going to manifest its contributions through "presence, ongoing dialogue, discerning prayers, sacrifice by fasting for Panlilio every Wednesday, risk-taking, personal and societal criticism, solidarity with marginalized sectors, and creative, timely and effective advocacy," Reyes said.

Kubol ng Pag-asa was a spin-off of Reyes' 40-day fast at the People's Power Monument on Ortigas Avenue during the first impeachment bid against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"I will be away but I will always keep in touch with him. I will be at his beck and call," he said, referring to Panlilio.

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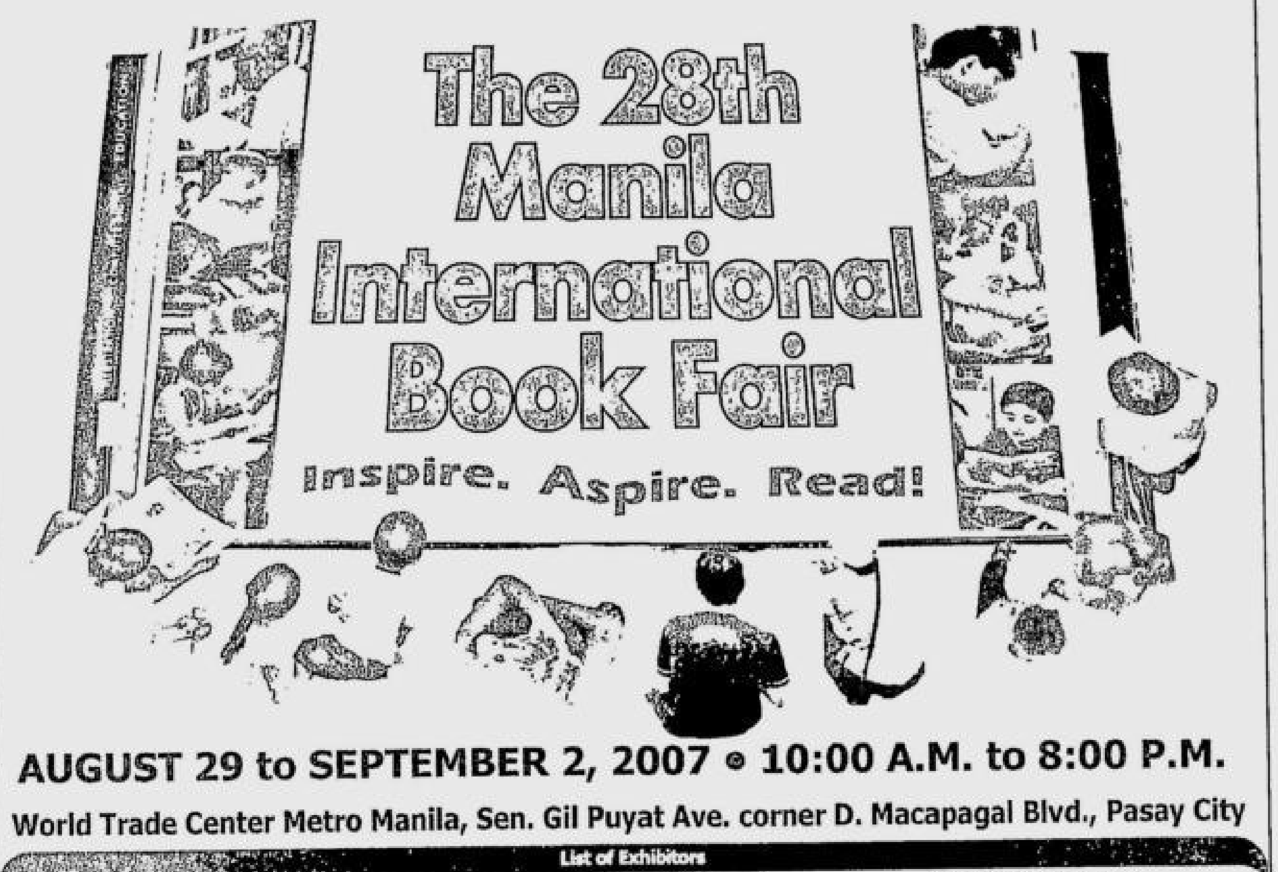
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Doc finds new life caring for elderly

By Romulo O. Ponte
San Pedro, Laguna

MINGLING WITH WELL-HEELED personalities comes naturally to Dr. Mercedes "Ched" Oliver, an obstetrician-gynecologist and resident of Ayala Village in Alabang, who has served patients in such medical institutions as the Makati Medical Center, St. Luke's Medical Center and the Asian Hospital.

DR. MERCEDES "Ched" Oliver

A member of the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Medicine Class '57, Dr. Ched, as she is fondly called, has also been involved in the real estate business, venturing into building homes for the rich.

By a strange quirk of fate, however, she found herself performing tasks she was not used to when she was involved in building the Mary Mother of Mercy Home for the Elderly and the Abandoned (MMMHEA), or simply the Home. These duties consist of caring for the sick, elderly, handicapped, filthy, poor and abandoned.

Being a physician and only daughter taking care of her elderly mother in Ayala Alabang, Dr. Ched was only too aware of the difficulty of caring for the elderly, the sick and the abandoned. Her mother died a few years ago under her care and close watch.

The septuagenarian doctor said "putting up a home for the elderly, the sickly and the abandoned was neither among my plans nor my dreams." She said it was not easy to engage in an apostolate she had no knowledge of and to serve people she did not know.

"With God Himself planting and tending the seed of service in my heart, however, I just found myself working very hard for the apostolate, giving no thought of any material return for the time and resources I was investing in," Dr. Ched added.

She was later convinced that her involvement "is the work of the Holy Spirit—it is the finger of God that prods and guides me in this apostolate."

'Putting up a home for the elderly, the sickly and the abandoned was neither among my plans nor my dreams'

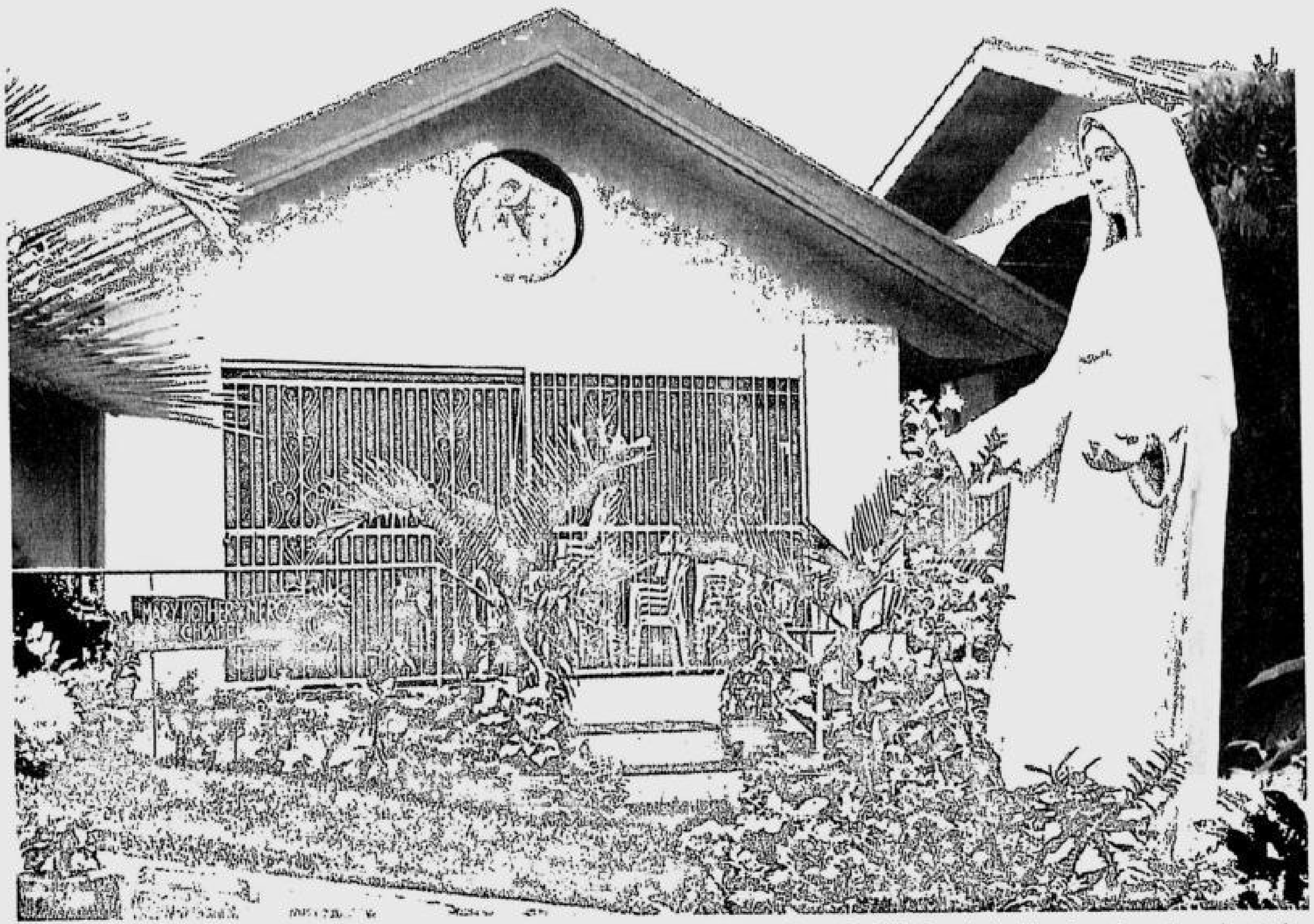
Ward

With help from other people, Dr. Ched has taken care of 127 persons from all over the country.

The oldest of them is Remedios Lopez, 86, a former public school teacher in Tondo, Manila. She was married and had a son who died early. When her husband died and she retired from teaching, she found no one among her relatives to take care of her while her savings were used up for her hospital expenses.

Another resident is Domingo Tapales, 84, of Catanduanes. He and his wife lived for seven years with their in-laws. But when his wife died, his relationship with his in-laws turned sour until he was compelled to leave and wander without direction. Tragedy struck when he was run over by a vehicle, which caused the amputation of his left leg.

Two Good Samaritans—Mang Atoy and Aling Liling Montefalcon—cared for the old man and helped him get admitted to the Home.



THE COMPOUND where the chapel and the quarters of the Mary Mother of Mercy Home for Elderly and the Abandoned wards are located.

PHOTOS BY ROMULO O. PONTE

Another ward is Felicidad Castillo, 71, of Abra, who was found begging in the streets of Muntinlupa City. Her life remains unshared as she cannot talk due to a previous stroke.

Scores of elderly occupants of the Home, who could not remember some details of their lives include Isabel Medilila, (age unknown); Dorotea Reyes, 84; Honoria Espigol, 82; Carolina Reyes, 79; Raymunda Magnaye, 71; Socorro de Leon, 58; Ramon Estrada, 63; Pilar Anala, 74; Teresita Crive, 68.

Beginnings

Dr. Ched said the apostolate began when she became close to Josefina "Pining" Paradina whose dream was to build a home for the elderly, the sick and the abandoned in San Pedro, Laguna.

"Without my knowing of it, Ti Pining's dream was already growing inside my heart and I was already imbibing the message of service to the less fortunate members of our society. Still, when Ti Pining could no longer pursue her dream because of old age and financial constraints, I found myself the unprepared and hesitant worker in the vineyard of the Lord," she confessed.

The Home started operations in 1994 in a most unlikely location—the office of Everlasting Memorial Park, which is owned by Dr. Ched.

At the start, Brothers Anthony Juan Bautista and Arnel de Pablo of the Blessed Sacrament Missionary of the Poor cared for seven male ward patients in the small office until a more suitable and permanent site could be found.

In 1995, the Home was entrusted to the care of a third woman—Mary, Mother of Mercy—under whose name and patronage the apostolate was formally set up as a foundation. In 1996, it broke ground for a new house on a 1,565-square-meter lot donated by Dr. Ched in San Pedro.

The house was completed in 1997 with funding almost totally provided by the foundation members.

Mission

The MMMHEA has a mission of "service to the sickly, rejected, forgotten and abandoned elderly members of the society." It envisions "a community that nurtures and nourishes the body and soul of one another (both those who served and those being served), forming a group of God's people who help each other attain eternal life."

Bautista, De Pablo and the seven ward members moved into the house in 1998.

Later, the management was relinquished to a lay person, Lily Almendrala, in 1998 up to 2000, who, with a co-worker, cared for the increasing number of ward members. That time, the Home started to admit female wards.

In 2000, a chapel, connected to the Home by a ramp was built. The Adoration Convent of Divine Mercy or the Pink Sisters of Tagaytay donated its old tabernacle to the new chapel.

In the same year, sisters from the Servants of Mary took over the management. By 2002, four sisters from Burma (Myanmar) of the Missionary Sisters of St. Francis Xavier headed by Sister Imelda then Sister Filomena came.

At present, three nuns from the group communicate their love, care and understanding to the old, cranky, unreasonable and sometimes ungrateful residents. They have established a healthy relationship between caregivers who are now doing on-the-job training with the old ward patients.

For the foundation, caring for the sick, the elderly and the abandoned consists not only of housing, feeding and clothing the less privileged but also helping them to understand and accept the mercy of God amid their affliction and to entrust their twilight years and very death to the same merciful God.

In this, the support of religious communities and of many priests in the parishes in nearby San Pedro has not been wanting.

Gone

To date, 27 of the elderly ward members have died and were buried at the Everlasting Peace Memorial Park. With their graves properly identified by marble markers, they have been saved from the lot of other abandoned people who die in the streets and usually buried anonymously in pauper's graves in public.

Many faces, 127 of them, have come to and gone from the Home, some have been found and reconciled with their kin.

Others have been transferred to other health and social service institutions. Still others have gone back to the streets, feeling that they were already strong enough to try it on their own.

Marinduque regales guests with traditional 'putong'

By Gerald Gene R. Querubin
Boac, Marinduque

PEOPLE IN THE TINY, heart-shaped island of Marinduque are warmly welcoming friends and visitors in a unique tradition befitting kings and queens in their own right.

Literally meaning coronation or to crown, the *putong* (also called *tubong*) is a song of thanksgiving and, at the same time, a wish and a prayer for a long, blessed life. It has remained one of the popular traditions in this deeply religious province.

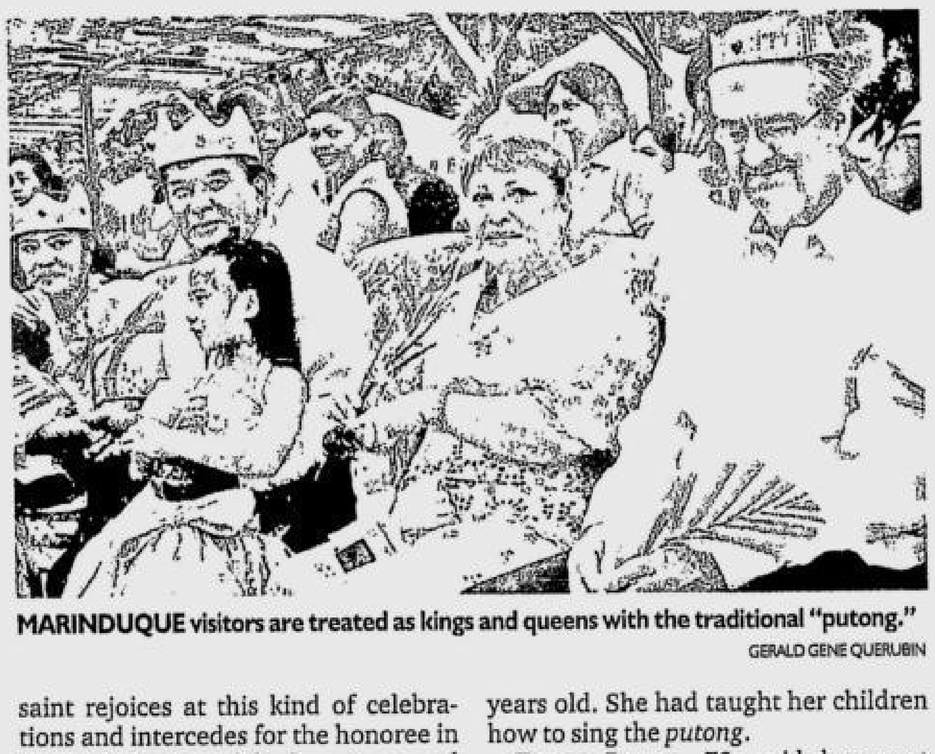
The practice has been extended to visitors and guests as a gesture of hospitality. It is, in fact, a prayer for their success, health and prosperity, and has evolved into a song of love, respect, praise and thanksgiving.

"The *putong* reflects the life of the people, frequently the common Marinduqueños," said Prof. Rex Asuncion, director for culture and arts of the Marinduque State College.

Folk music

The *putong* can be classified as a folk music for it is an expression of folk concerns and often makes use of native folk poetry set to simple melodies, he said.

According to beliefs, the patron saint rejoices at this kind of celebrations and intercedes for the honoree in his wish for long life, happiness and safety from accidents and bad luck. The *putong* is likewise performed during birthdays and anniversaries, and even when someone passes the licensure board examinations or wins in contests.



MARINDUQUE visitors are treated as kings and queens with the traditional "putong."

GERALD GENE QUERUBIN

Marta Jardeleza, an 80-year-old "*mamumutong*" or performer from Mogpog town, said she learned the song from a friend when she was 15 years old. She had taught her children how to sing the *putong*.

Teresa Bunag, 79, said her aunt taught her the song.

In the six towns of the province, the performance is basically similar, except for the melodies and lyrics. All singers wear costumes—the women in *kimona* and *saya*, and the men in *barong Tagalog*—and bring baskets of fresh flowers, palm leaves, and assorted coins.

They dance and sway to the accompaniment of musical instruments, usually guitars and banjos.

The performance

The ceremony starts with the "*mamumutong*" or the "*manunubong*," who gather in front of the home of the host. The host may either be prepared for the event or taken by surprise.

As they enter the house, they explain their purpose and request for the host's hospitality. "*Narito po kami, Mahal na maybahay. Tinugtog na namin ang instrumentong taglay* (We are here, dear host. We are already playing our instruments)," goes the song.

The first stage is known as the "*pananayawan*." The verses are sung slowly until everybody is in the receiving room. At this juncture, the honoree is seated on a chair (supposedly the throne) at the center of the room or stage and flanked by two family members, each holding a lighted candle.

"*Pag-akyat namin sa mahal mong baitang, may dalawang anghel ang aming nadatnan. Tig-isang kandila ang kanilang tangan, sa tamang umaakyat ay tinatanglaw* (As we enter your home, there are two angels waiting for us. They have candles to guide us)."

The song's tempo picks up and the celebration is on a climax when the crown is placed on the honoree's head.

"*Nang kami ay dumating sa loob ng Herusalem, ang palma ay sa kamay, korona'y sa ulo. Kanimanawari'y magkapantay ito, sambahi't igalang nitong buong mundo* (When we arrived at Jerusalem, palms in our hands, crowns on heads. Hoping that the world will praise and respect them)."

Flowers and coins

The honoree is showered with flowers and coins, symbolizing affection and wishes of good luck and prosperity. This is the cue for the host and other guests to throw candies, coins and paper bills to the honoree, as children and adults alike scamper for the bounty. Shouts and laughters fill the air.

It is said that the crown and the coins must be kept for good luck.

"*Kahimaniwari'y habaan ng buhay, sa mahal na santong aming pinutungan. Kahimanawari'y siya ay ilagay, mahabang panahong walang karamdaman. Ipag viva natin tuloy ipagdiwang ang mahal na santong pinutungan* (We are hoping that the saint that we crowned will have a long life. We are hoping that he would be free from any ailments. Let us celebrate for the saint that we crowned)."

The *putong* ends with everybody shouting "*Mabuhay*!" and partaking of food, drinks and stories in a "*salo-salo*."

Asuncion, Jardeleza and Bunag agreed that the Marinduqueños should appreciate the *putong* as part of their cultural heritage that the next generations must preserve.

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JAPAN WORK
One of the unfinished portions of the flagship project Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway sticks out like a sore thumb in the P21-billion project that two Japanese contractors, KOJM and Hazama, were unable to finish on time.

Pagsanjan Falls trips stopped after accident

PAGSANJAN, LAGUNA—MAYor Emilio Ramon Ejercito III suspended all boat rides to the Pagsanjan Falls on Wednesday following an accident that befell foreign and local tourists.

Chief Insp. Leovigildo Manaig, town police chief, said Ejercito instructed him to immediately inform all resort owners and boat operators about the temporary postponement of all boat rides going to the falls.

"Mayor Ejercito just wanted to ensure the safety of all visitors and boatmen," Manaig told the INQUIRER.

He said the suspension of boat trips would be lifted as soon as the weather cleared and until the investigation is finished.

Who's to blame?

Manaig said probers were looking into the possible legal responsibilities of resort owners and boat operators who allowed the boatmen to set off to the falls despite the heavy rains.

He said he and Ejercito would also personally inspect the area where the tourists and boatmen were stranded. "But you know, it's hard to predict when the water will rise. Nobody can really tell when the river swells," he said.

On Tuesday, 20 tourists and 18 boatmen were stranded for six hours in the river when the boats they were riding in were caught between huge rocks at the boundary of Cavinti and Pagsanjan rivers.

Stranded

They included 13 Koreans, two Japanese and five Filipinos on vacation from abroad, and the 18 local boatmen who manned the nine wooden boats.

They were eventually rescued by policemen, personnel of the 202nd Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army and volunteers of the Philippine National Red Cross.

The tourists, who suffered superficial wounds and abrasions in the arms and legs, were taken to the resorts where they were given medical attention.

The Koreans were fetched by officials of their embassy and immediately brought to Manila.

Demon Cave

Residents said the place where the tourists were stuck was actually a small cave known as "Demon Cave."

"We couldn't really see what the area exactly looked like because it was very dark. It was also foggy there during the rescue operations," Manaig said.

He said the tourists were just day-trippers who came from different "takeoff points" in Pagsanjan and took the boats from the resorts where they were billeted.

"As far as we know, all the trips were contracted by the tourists through the resort operators. This means that the trips were covered by necessary permits," Manaig told the INQUIRER.

Known locally as "shooting the rapids," the boat ride to Pagsanjan Falls consists of exhilarating trips to at least 13 torrents along the rough river.

Manaig said the visitors were on their way to the last torrent at around 5 p.m. when one of the boatmen noticed that the water level was rapidly rising.

He said water brought by a heavy downpour, which came rushing down from the mountains around the falls, could have caused the river to swell. *Marlon Ramos, with a report from Niña Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Spain keeps aid flowing to typhoon victims

By Ephraim Aguilar
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LIGAO CITY—THE Spanish government has given anew 173 tons or 16,000 galvanized iron sheets to help typhoon survivors rebuild houses in Albay.

Spain's Charge d' Affaires Alvaro Trejo said the assistance benefited 151 households from 21 villages in this city.

In a turnover ceremony on Aug. 23, Trejo also announced that the Spanish government had approved a P60-million grant to the local government for the rehabilitation of the badly damaged Ligao City Hospital.

SCHOOLCHILDREN welcome Alvaro Trejo, Charge d' Affaires of the Spanish Embassy; Jesus Molina, General Coordinator of Agencia Española de Cooperacion International and Ligao City Mayor Linda Gonzalez during the distribution of emergency assistance to the affected families of Typhoon Milenyo and Reming at the Ligao Gymnasium, Ligao City in Albay.
NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Equipment

Trejo said the money, coursed through the Agencia Española de Cooperacion Internacionale, would be used for the repair of the hospital, as well as for the acquisition and upgrade of medical equipment.

The Spanish agency was one of the first institutions to extend help after Typhoons "Milenyo" and "Reming" wreaked massive havoc in Bicol late last year.

It has already extended a total of P54 million to Albay, covering community projects on farming and livestock, infrastructure and education.

Farm tools

Cedric Daep, executive officer of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council, said the Spanish Embassy also gave more than P4 million in farm tools, seeds, pesticides, and knapsack sprayers to those who had lost their livelihood to the storms.

Trejo said he wanted the Filipinos to remember the help of the Spanish government not merely as a dole-out but as a product of cooperation between the two countries.

"The Philippines and Spain are two very close countries cooperating to promote development and reduce poverty—all part of a global effort," Trejo said.

N. Cotabato rejects call to accept mining

KIDAPAWAN CITY—THE NORTH Cotabato provincial board has rejected an appeal from the Environment and Management Bureau to reconsider its stand to ban mining in the province.

During its regular session on Tuesday, the board said it preferred environment protection over income from mining.

Earlier, EMB director for Central Mindanao Constancio Paye said the ban was against legal statutes, practices and government standard policy.

Wrong signal

Paye also said the move of the provincial government to ban legitimate mining in the province would send a wrong signal to foreign and local investors and would create a negative perception of the government's mining policy.

"Striking off the ban is relevant to the government's thrust on investments promotion and responsible mining," Paye said.

But the board, presided over by Vice Gov. Emmanuel Piñol, reacted sharply to the DENR argument.

Mining operations

"Only the people of North Cotabato can decide what is more important to them—business, the environment or people's lives," Piñol later said.

He said that in areas where mining operations were allowed, people had been suffering from water or airborne diseases and their communities were prone to landslides and flash floods.

"I respect the position of our people. It's clear as enshrined in the local environment code, and we will stand by that," he said.

Environmental protection

Gov. Jesus Sacdalan said the province had always placed environmental protection and preservation as among its top priorities.

In Dipolog City in Zamboanga del Norte, the Church-based Committee on Mining Issues (DCMI) said reports about a breach in the tailings dam of the Canadian-owned TVI Pacific Inc. on July 11 was proven during a recent investigation by the MGB.

DCMI representatives joined the investigation upon the invitation of the EMB, according to Tito Natividad Fiel, DCMI coordinator. *Edwin Fernandez, Charlie Señase and Ryan Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao*

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Transmission Steel Towers and Line Materials Including Installation for the Restoration of Damaged Portion of the Naga - Tayabas 500kV Transmission Line Project (Sp7.TSTNTTL.Lt-0112)

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO)** through its **Annual Corporate Budget**, intends to apply the sum of **Philippine Peso 198,700,000.00** for the Supply and Delivery of Transmission Steel Towers and Line Materials Including Installation for the Restoration of Damaged Portion of the Naga Tayabas 500kV Transmission Line (Sp07.TSTNTTL.Lt-0112) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the above project. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. **TRANSCO** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the **Supply and Delivery of Transmission Steel Towers and Line Materials Including Installation for the Restoration of Damaged Portion of the Naga - Tayabas 500kV Transmission Line**. Delivery and Installation of the GOODS is required within **240 calendar days from contract effectivity**. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section 1B of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is open to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations, and to Foreign bidders. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine the bid's responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) determined after the conduct of the post-qualification evaluation.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **TRANSCO** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address stated in Item 10 starting **September 3, 2007 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address stated below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of ***Philippine Peso 20,000.00***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. **TRANSCO** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **September 26, 2007**, ***9:00 a.m.*** at *C. U. Del Rosario Function Hall B & C, Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.*
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the venue of the bid opening stated in item 8 on or before **9:00 a.m.** of **October 9, 2007**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form and in the amount specified in Section III of the Bidding Documents, BDS. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be held on **October 9, 2007, 9:00 a.m.** at *C. U. Del Rosario Function Hall B & C, Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.
9. **TRANSCO** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder/s.
10. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the BAC Secretariat at the following address:

Mr. Richard D. Nabong
Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department (BCMD)
Ground Floor, TransCo Main Building, Power Center
National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road
1104 Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, PHILIPPINES
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Email address: rdnabong@transco.ph
http://www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) **ATTY. NOEL Z. DE LEON**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2007)

Garduce conquers another mountain

By Alcuin Papa

THE COUNTRY'S MOST ACcomplished mountaineer has added another peak to his climbing cap.

Romi Garduce, the 38-year-old IT professional from Balanga, Bataan, conquered Mt. Elbrus on Monday, Manila time.

Roel Chan, of Garduce's outfitter The North Face, told the INQUIRER that he received a text message from Garduce reporting his latest feat.

"He said the weather was very bad. He left two weeks ago quietly because he didn't want much fanfare," Chan said.

Mt. Elbrus in Russia is the highest peak in Europe at 5,642 meters or 18,510 feet. The mountain is on the list of the so-called Seven Summits, or the tallest mountain in each of the seven continents of the world.

The other summits include Mt. Kilimanjaro (5,895 meters or 19,341 feet), the highest peak of Africa; Mt. Aconcagua in Argentina (6,962 meters or 22,841 feet), the highest peak in South America; Mt. McKinley or Denali (6,194 meters or 20,320 feet), the highest in North America; the Carstensz Pyramid (4,884 meters or 16,024 feet) in the Australian continent; the Vinzon Massif in Antarctica (4,892 meters or 16,050 feet); and Mt. Everest (8,848 meters or 29,029) in Asia, the highest mountain in the world.

With his feat in Elbrus, Garduce has already scaled four of the Seven Summits. He already scaled Kilimanjaro in September 2002, the first Filipino to set foot on the top of any of the Seven Summits. He climbed Aconcagua in January 2005 and reached the peak of Everest in May 2006.

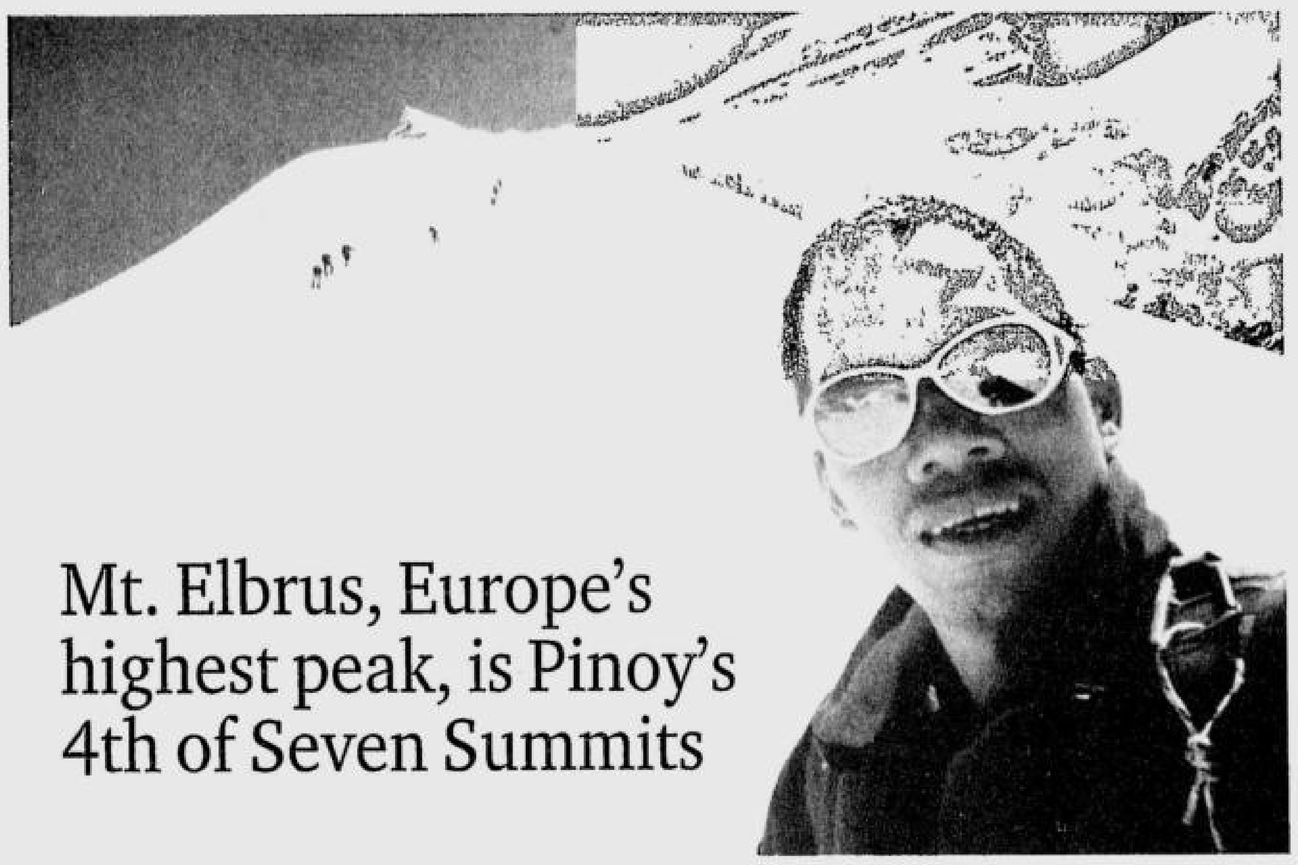
After climbing Everest, scaling all Seven Summits is considered the greatest of mountaineering feats.

It was actually the second time Garduce had attempted to scale Elbrus. His first attempt was in August of 2004 when he had to turn back due to bad weather with a few hundred yards left to the summit.

"In effect, this is unfinished business for Romi," Chan pointed out.

Besides four of the Seven Summits, Garduce has climbed Cho-Oyu (8,201 meters or 26,906 feet) in the Himalayan range and the sixth highest mountain in the world; and Annapurna (8,091 meters or 26,545 feet) also in the Himalayan range.

Chan said Garduce is en route to Moscow to catch a flight to Manila. He is slated to return to the country on Friday.



Mt. Elbrus, Europe's highest peak, is Pinoy's 4th of Seven Summits

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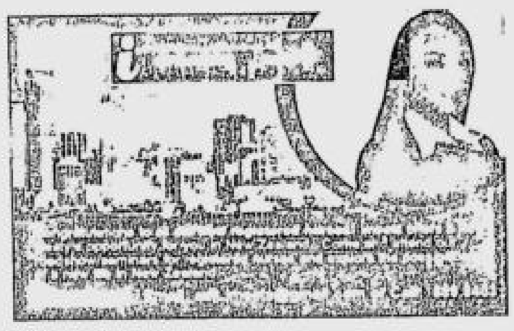

Doc holds key to UP stude's death

Diliman community mum on frat involvement

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE POLICE ARE LOOKING FOR Dr. Francisco Cruz, the man who took Chris Anthony Mendez, a suspected hazing victim and graduating student of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center at dawn Monday where he was declared dead on arrival.

Supt. Oscar Palisoc, Quezon City Police District Station 9 commander, told the INQUIRER yesterday that they have been trying since Tuesday to reach Cruz after he was identified by a hospital security guard as the one who took Mendez to the VMMC.

"Our police investigators at the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit are looking for him because he is the key to helping us find out what happened to the UP student," Palisoc said.

According to the police, Cruz is a doctor at the VMMC. But he has not reported for work since the incident and has not responded to calls made to his cellular phone either, they added.

Mendez, 20, a public administration student who was appointed just last week to represent his college—the National College of Public Administration and Governance—in the UP Student Council was brought to the hospital at 1:08 a.m. Monday by Cruz and several other people.

The victim bore bruises all over his body, especially on the back of his arms and thighs. Unresponsive and pale, he was declared dead on arrival by an attending doctor minutes later.

From the hospital, Mendez's body was taken to the St. Peter's Memorial Chapels on Quezon Avenue where his mother proceeded from Tiaong, Quezon after she received a phone call about her son from someone who said she was her son's landlady.

A police investigator told the INQUIRER that they have already identified a student who is suspected of having recruited Mendez into the UP Sigma Rho fraternity.

The source, who asked not to be identified because he was not authorized to talk to media about the case, said that they would invite Ariel Paolo Ante, the NCPAG student council chair, for questioning.

Ante, the source said, reportedly asked Mendez's friends to wish him good luck "for the initiation" which was to take place over the weekend. Mendez was a member of the NCPAG student council.

UP officials and students have refused to identify the fraternity Mendez allegedly

DOC/A18

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URBAN INSTITUTE OF REAL ESTATE

'I'm the victim,' says Alvarez on mauling case

By Kristine L. Alave

FORMER BASKETBALL STAR PAUL "BONG" Alvarez yesterday pleaded not guilty to charges of physical injuries filed against him by taxi driver Wilfredo Cabanlit and ABS-CBN reporter Gretchen Malalad at the Mandaluyong City Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 59.

Alvarez told reporters that he was the victim in the Aug. 21 mauling incident, adding that he would file counter charges against Malalad. "I am not to blame. I am the victim here. I received a lot of blows on the head," he added.

Alvarez and Malalad got into a fight last week at the Mandaluyong City police station, after the former cager, who was drunk according to the police, was arrested for allegedly mauling Cabanlit. According to Alvarez, Cabanlit tried to pad his taxi cab fare by taking a longer route.

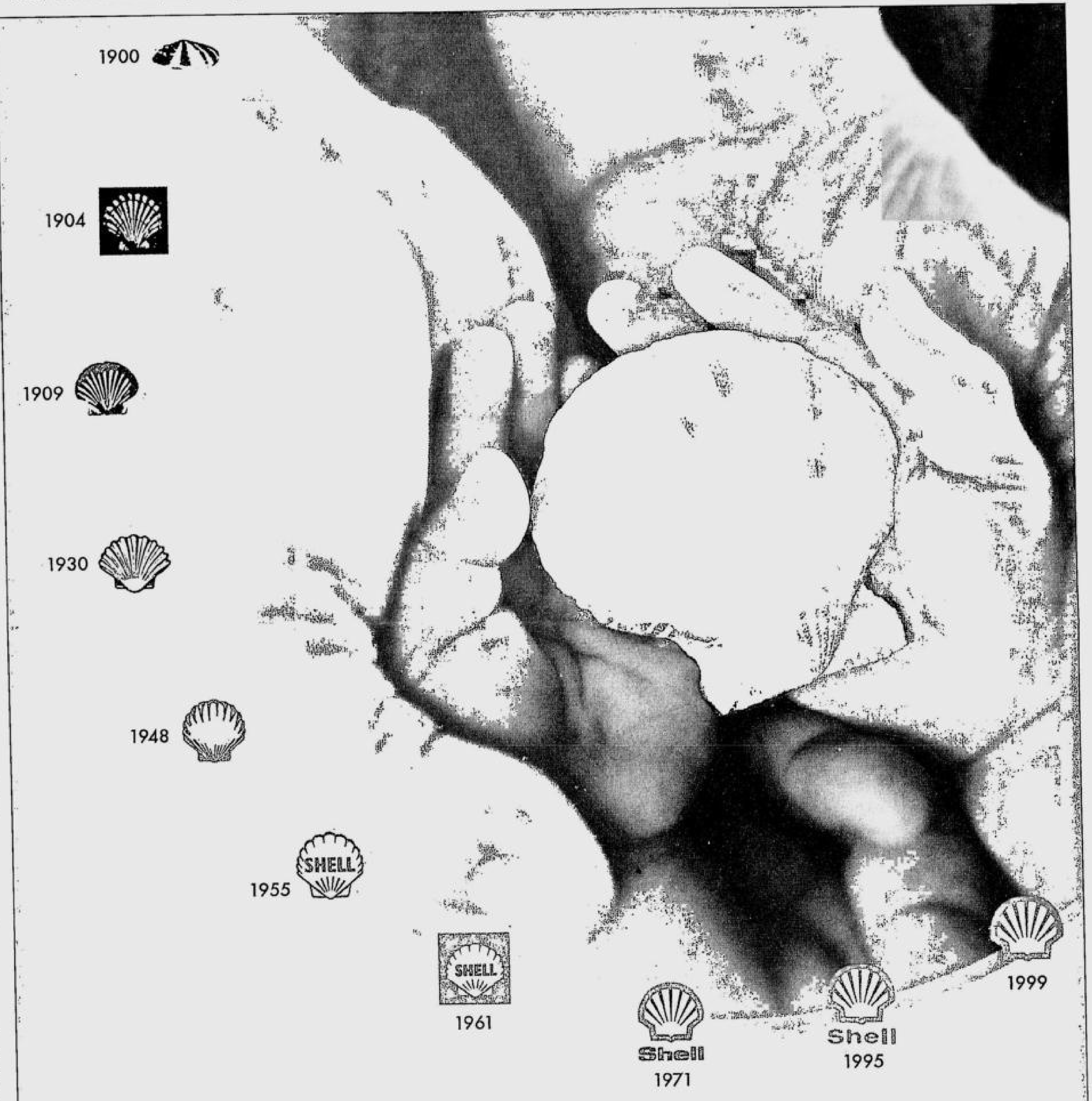
At the police station, Malalad, who was trying to get Alvarez's side, claimed he hit her face and pulled her hair. Malalad, a karate expert and Southeast Asian Games gold medalist, said she was compelled to fight back, hitting Alvarez in the face and kicking him. The television reporter was a no-show during the arraignment.

DID YOU KNOW

PUBLIC Law No. 5 of the Second Philippine Commission created in 1900 a Civil Service Board mandated to administer civil service examinations and set standards for appointment to government posts. It was converted into a bureau in 1905.

In 1959, Republic Act No. 2260 or the Civil Service Law reorganized the bureau into the Civil Service Commission, the central personnel agency of the government. The CSC is tasked to formulate rules for the implementation of position classification and compensation. It also administers the retirement program of government officials and employees.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research



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Mike Velarde's kin hold juicy positions

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

WHEN PRESIDENT GLORIA visited the Marine camp in Tabiawan, Basilan recently, many officers didn't take part in the "boodle fight," military slang for meal, usually lunch, where those who partake of it pick the food using their hands.

Most of the officers who skipped the boodle fight wanted to show displeasure at their Commander in Chief for inviting Basilan Gov. Jum Akbar, wife of Rep. Wahab Akbar, to their camp.

The Marines in Basilan suspect that Akbar's men were the ones who beheaded their comrades who died in an ambush in July.

One of them told me that if the President and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Hermogenes Esperon had not been there, they would have expressed their displeasure about the presence of Akbar's wife in the affair.

* * *

Nothing will come out of the revival by the Senate opposition of the "Hello Garci" wiretap scandal.

People are sick and tired of hearing "Garci" most of them want to throw up.

They allow Sen. Panfilo Lacson a little leeway in beating a dead horse because of his alleged "strange" ways.

In short, people tolerate Lacson, but don't take him seriously.

* * *

The Marine commandant, Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga, is the new commander of the Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom) vice Lt. Gen. Eugene Cedo, who has retired.

Cedo has been saved by the bell, so to speak, because of his retirement.

President Gloria would have relieved Cedo over the series of military setbacks in Basilan and Sulu, but she was told to let him be since he was retiring anyway.

Cedo's replacement, Allaga, is perceived by subordinates at the Marine Corps as a "do-nothing" commandant.

The President could have chosen a better replacement.

* * *

A sour note in the July ambush of the Marines in Basilan: Why did the survivors leave their dead and wounded behind?

At least three of those left behind were still alive when their attackers came upon them. They were tortured before they were killed. The Marines were never known for leaving their dead and wounded behind when they retreat from battle.

That was the first time they did so, and it's very discouraging. One Marine officer I talked to said the Marine rank and file have lost their strong sense of camaraderie. It's now every man for himself.

The reason? Most of their best officers are in jail on charges of taking part in a failed coup attempt in February 2005.

* * *

"Who's afraid of Mike Velarde?" was the headline of this column Tuesday.

The answer to that, of course, is everyone in government.

In this country, religious leaders are feared more than the top government honchos because they command many votes during elections.

Velarde knows how people in government, especially in this administration, fear him. That's why his relatives are holding juicy government positions.

J.J. Yambao, married to Velarde's only daughter, is a member of the board of trustees of sequestered television IBC 13.

Beng Velarde, married to party-list Rep. Rene Velarde, is deputy general manager of the government-run Duty Free Shop.

Trader turns over explosives found in Caloocan junk shop

By Nancy Carvajal

A CHINESE-FILIPINO BUSINESSman yesterday turned over to the Caloocan City police 160 explosive devices, including vintage bombs, found among tons of scrap metal sold to him by junk shop owners.

Chief Supt. Pedro Tango, Northern Police District director, said the explosives were surrendered by David Tan, owner of Advance Trans System Corp.

According to Tango, the devices were "live, and if mishandled, could explode."

He described the bombs as 105mm howitzers, 88mm mortar bombs, anti-tank bombs, drop bombs and a hand grenade.

Tango added that the explosives, which were estimated to weigh at least three tons, were turned over to Caloocan City's Special Weapons and Tactics and Explosives and Ordnance units for disposal.

The businessman said the explosives were found among the tons of scrap materials sold in bulk to his company by junk shop owners in Metro Manila.

The NPD chief cleared Tan of any liability and said that "he did the right thing in turning over to authorities the armed bombs."

Tan's company, located on Sabalo Street in Dagat-dagatan, Caloocan City, is engaged in the export of recycled scrap metals to China, the police official said.

Beware of 'clone' credit cards, NBI warns

By Allison W. Lopez

A SUSPECTED MEMBER OF A syndicate which makes duplicates of credit cards has been arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in an entrapment operation.

According to NBI Director Nestor Mantaring, the group uses an improvised "skimming" device to download the information in a credit card's magnetic stripe. The information is then used to create a duplicate of the card.

Mantaring said it was the first time they seized a skimming device in the country. The battery-operated gadget, however, seemed to be improvised, he added.

Arrested was Melvin Ticson Garcia, 30, a driver and resident of San Jose del Monte City in Bulacan. He admitted that he paid Menandro Caleze, a waiter of a bar on Roxas Boulevard, to swipe their customers' credit cards on the skimming device.

The gang's illegal activities, however, were discovered by the bank which issued the credit card. Bank officials then alerted the bar owner about their discovery.

Caleze admitted that he earned P2,500 from swiping five of their customers' credit cards on Aug. 15 and 16. He also pointed to Garcia as the one who gave him the skimming device.

An investigation by the Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division, headed by Vicente de Guzman, showed that the gang used its duplicate credit cards in stores like the SM Hypermarket in Marilao, Bulacan.

De Guzman said the gang was able to buy P64,808 worth of groceries using one of the "clone" cards.

FIREMEN battle a fire which hit a row of establishments and several vehicles on Commonwealth Avenue in Barangay Holy Spirit yesterday. Five people were hurt in the incident. JOAN BONDOC

Fire hits commercial row in QC; 5 hurt

By Jeannette I. Andrade

AN HOUR-LONG FIRE RAZED a row of commercial and residential establishments in Quezon City yesterday afternoon, injuring at least five persons.

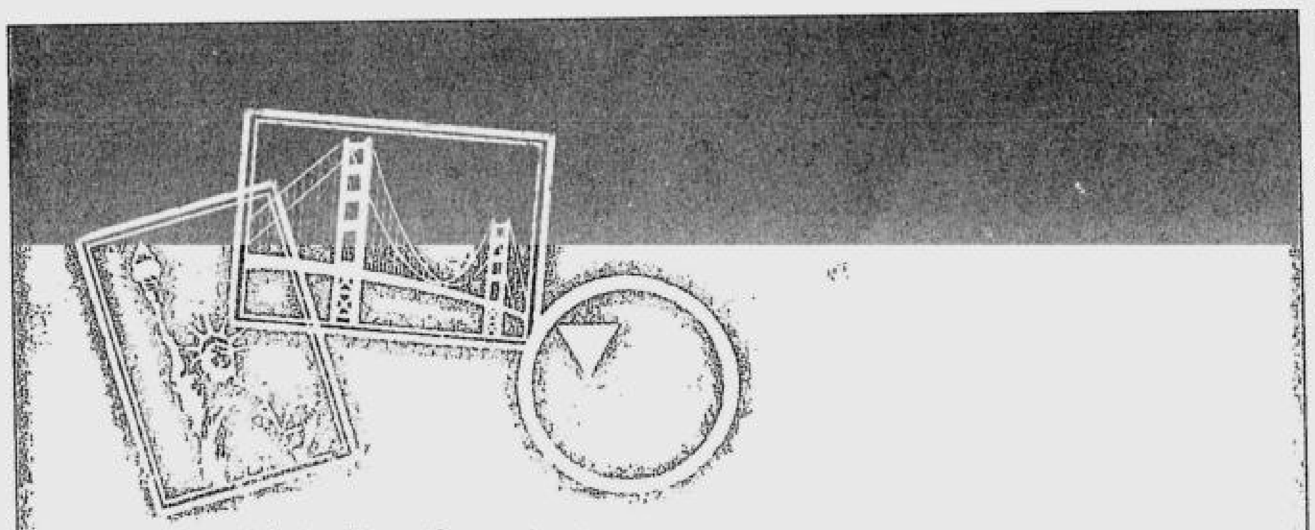
Quezon City fire marshal Chief Insp. Oscar Villegas identified two of the victims as Leonardo Bernardo and Marvin Laynes. They were brought to the East Avenue Medical Center for treatment of burns.

Bernardo and Laynes were briefly trapped inside an electric fan repair shop where the fire reportedly started.

Villegas said the fire began at 11:08 a.m. and destroyed seven establishments on Commonwealth Avenue, in front of the Commission on Audit building in Barangay Holy Spirit.

The blaze reached the third alarm before firefighters were able to put it out at 12:03 p.m.

Arson investigators are verifying a report that an unattended stove which tipped over by accident could have caused the fire.



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Doc holds key . . .

From page A17

joined before his death.

In a statement, UP Chancellor Sergio Cao extended the university's condolences to the victim's family. "We sternly urge the officers, members and alumni of the concerned fraternity to extend their full support and cooperation to the University and the authorities to swiftly bring this case to its just and proper resolution," he said.

According to the security guard on duty at the hospital at the time Mendez was brought to the VMMC, Cruz was on board a white Toyota Innova (ZXB 393) while his companions were on board two vehicles: an Isuzu Trooper (WGL 515) and a Nissan Frontier (XAS 548).

A check with the Land Transportation Office showed that the Trooper is registered to Beda G. Fajardo, of Cubao, Quezon City while the Frontier is in the name of the Babybon Export Inc. in Muntinlupa City. The pick-up was listed as being used by a certain B.L. Santos.

A member of the UP community who asked not to be identified confirmed the information from the LTO and said that the vehicles were being used by two UP students with the same surnames as the vehicles' registered owners.

The source added that at around 3 a.m. Monday, one of Mendez's classmates received a phone call from an unidentified caller who was using the victim's cellular phone. According to the caller, Mendez's body was at St. Peter's. Mendez did not have his cellular phone, automated teller machine cards and personal belongings when he was brought to the hospital.

UP Student Council president Shahana Abdulwahid said the entire student body and the council strongly condemn what happened to Mendez.

"Until the organization that we believe is involved in this breaks its silence, our speculation that the group had something to do with the death will not be dispelled," Abdulwahid said, referring to a fraternity she did not name.

She added that they have been trying to talk to the officers of the fraternity to no avail. The INQUIRER also tried to reach the Fajardo home and that of J Castro, Sigma Rho Council of Elders president, for comment, but was told that the parties were not home.

NCPAG Dean Alex Brillantes, meanwhile, said he would meet with members of the UP Student Council and the student body to urge those who knew what happened to Mendez to come forward. "We want to find out how Chris died. The entire UP community wants to find out and we are supporting any investigation of his death," he told the INQUIRER.

METROBRIEFS

More shanties torn down

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority yesterday began demolishing more shanties along the Tripa de Gallina creek near the boundary of Pasay and Makati cities after the two-day reprieve it gave to residents. Three truckloads of MMDA personnel began dismantling the wooden structures at 10 a.m. without much resistance from people in the area. MMDA Sidewalk Clearing Operations Group chief Roberto Esquivel said they will clear the waterway of remaining obstructions despite the residents' insistence that they be relocated first.

Julie M. Aurelio

Man kills uncle

A MAN who met his distant uncle through the Friendster network was arrested by Pasay policemen Tuesday night after he stabbed his relative at least 40 times during a botched robbery attempt. Alpine Saguil was caught by patrolling policemen as he tried to escape from the unit of his uncle, Joseph Cruz, at the Park Avenue Mansions condominium in Pasay City. The suspect, along with Rudy Navarro, 26, were in a dark blue Mitsubishi Galant (TMC 195) when the police stopped them because the car was moving as if the driver did not know how to drive. Cruz, however, was declared dead on arrival at the San Juan de Dios Hospital for multiple stab wounds. Pasay City police chief, Senior Supt. Marietto Valerio, said Saguil met Cruz through Friendster, an Internet-based network, and found out that they were distant relatives. After visiting him several times, Cruz was surprised to see his nephew rummaging through his things. The suspect, however, turned on his uncle and stabbed him.

Julie M. Aurelio

Samahang Plaridel marks Del Pilar's 157th birthday

SAMAHANG Plaridel, the association of veteran journalists and communicators, in cooperation with the Manila city government, will mark today the 157th birthday of Filipino patriot Marcelo H. del Pilar who used the pen name Plaridel. A simple wreath-laying ceremony at his monument at Plaza Plaridel in Malate, Manila, will be led by Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, Samahang Plaridel president Rolando Estabillo and representatives from the National Historical Institute, Manila Historical and Heritage Commission and Mababang Paaralan ng Plaridel. Also expected at the celebration is Blums Pineda, one of Del Pilar's descendants. Other Samahang Plaridel directors and officers who are expected to attend include Rodolfo Reyes, former press secretary; Julius Fortuna, Plaridel vice president; Diosdado Beltran, Plaridel secretary; Jun Bautista, Jimmy Gil and Twinkle Valdez.

Mating game: Why men go for younger women

PARIS—SCIENTISTS SAY they have carried out the first study that confirms that evolutionary pressure—the drive to have more children, in short—is what causes the typical age gap among couples.

Researchers explored the theory that men go for younger, sexually attractive women in order to boost their chances of reproductive success, while women prefer older, successful men to provide the resources and security that increase their offspring's chance of survival.

The investigators trawled through a Swedish population database, covering 11,500 men and women born between 1945 and 1955, to see at what age these individuals became parents.

Among couples who stayed together, the most children were born in households where there was an age difference of four to six years.

When couples split up and mated again, they each opted for partners who were younger than the first.

That was especially so for older men, who went for women who were much younger. Women looking for a new mate generally chose a male who was slightly older than herself.

"The age preference for the partner increases (1/8) the (3/8) individual (1/8) reproductive (3/8) fitness of both men and women." *AFP*

Greek gov't faces heat over fires

ATHENS—GREECE'S GOVERNMENT faced a storm of criticism on Tuesday for its handling of forest fires that were raging on for their fifth day, creating a national disaster that has claimed more than 60 lives.

About 25 fires were blazing, mainly on the mountainous southern peninsula of Peloponnese which has been at the center of a crisis that began on Friday.

Hot winds were fanning the flames and testing the endurance of weary firefighters and 2,000 soldiers who have been drafted in to help.

At least 63 people have died with most of the victims engulfed by flames in isolated communities in Greece's worst catastrophe for decades, but the fire service said no villages were endangered on Tuesday.

Fire-fighting planes were lent by more than a dozen countries to help the Greek authorities dump water on the burning forests.

Nerves already frayed by the national disaster were stretched further when an earthquake measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale shook central Peloponnese.

The government has blamed arsonists for the fires, but the opposition Socialists said Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis was attempting to deflect criticism ahead of next month's general election.

"We are humiliated by the inability of the government to save the lives of ,our fellow citizens," Socialist leader George Papandreou said, dismissing the allegations of arson as "dangerous."

"When the prime minister adopts such theories, it is dangerous for the democratic institutions of a country," Papandreou said.

Karamanlis, whose conservatives are tipped to win the election on Sept. 16, went on the offensive.

He called on Greeks to pull together and promised that gutted homes would be rebuilt and forests re-planted, saying: "We must do everything possible to prevent young people from becoming disillusioned and leaving their villages." Seven people have been charged with arson and police were looking for evidence of further cases of fires being started in forests which are highly flammable following two months of intense heat.

Conspiracy theories swirled around the media, but one possible motive could be that the fires were started to clear land for illegal construction.

A new front in the fight against the fires opened late Tuesday when flames began to tear through pine forest near Marathon to the north of Athens.

Six planes, a helicopter and 13 fire trucks headed to the area and the fire was contained as darkness fell, a fire service spokesperson said.

Firefighters also rushed to tackle fires on Evia, the island north of Athens where four people have lost their lives, and in western Greece.

Meanwhile, elderly Greeks evacuated from their villages said they feared they had lost everything. *AFP*

NZ warns vs toxic Chinese toothpaste

WELLINGTON—NEW ZEALAND ON Wednesday asked retailers and consumers to dispose of 11 brands of Chinese-made toothpaste after tests confirmed they contained toxic chemicals.

The Ministry of Health said in a statement that a third of the Chinese-made toothpaste tested contained "unacceptable levels" of diethylene glycol.

Diethylene glycol is an industrial solvent used in paint and antifreeze and can cause kidney and liver damage.

Some of the brands could still be on sale although retailers had been warned in June to remove them from shop shelves while tests were conducted, the Health Ministry said.

Tests of toothpaste which are claimed to have health benefits are mandatory in New Zealand.

In July, China banned the use of diethylene glycol in toothpaste following a recall of Chinese-made products across the globe, including the United States, Spain, Singapore, Panama and several other Latin American and Caribbean countries. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

'Lucy' goes on display

HOUSTON—Lucy, the world's most famous human ancestor, will go on public display for the first time in the United States this week amid criticism that her 3.2 million year old bones are too fragile to withstand an 11-city tour. Lucy's remains were unveiled to reporters on Tuesday at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. The public will be able to view Lucy beginning on Friday. The fossil was named Lucy after the Beatles song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," which played during a celebration of the discovery in Ethiopia by US scientist Donald Johanson in 1974. Ethiopians refer to her as "Dinkenesh." **Reuters**

Pilgrims flee Iraqi city

KERBALA—Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims fled Iraq's holy city of Kerbala on Wednesday after a day of fierce gunbattles near two of Shiite Islam's holiest shrines killed 52 people during an annual religious rite. Sporadic and occasionally sustained gunfire could still be heard after dawn in the city, coming from the area around the shrines of Imam Hussein and Imam Abbas. Sirens of police cars and ambulances could be heard wailing throughout the city and police loudspeakers ordered pilgrims out of the ancient center. The general director of the al-Hussein hospital in Kerbala, 110 km south of the capital, said it had received 34 bodies and treated 239 wounded. **Reuters**

Noriega extradited

MIAMI—A US judge on Tuesday approved the extradition of former Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega to face money laundering charges in France when his long Florida prison sentence for drug smuggling ends next month. The decision by Magistrate William Turnoff said he would issue the extradition order on Wednesday for the now 73-year-old Noriega, who was jailed in the United States almost two decades ago for drug smuggling and racketeering after he was captured by US forces following the 1989 invasion of Panama. **Reuters**

3 Nato soldiers killed

KABUL—A suicide bomber killed three Nato soldiers in Afghanistan on Tuesday while more than 100 insurgents were killed in a separate battle that lasted deep into the night, the military said. The suicide blast, similar to scores carried out by the hardline Taliban militia, struck soldiers working at a project to build a bridge in the east of the country, the Nato-led alliance said. Six other soldiers were wounded in the attack. **AFP**

US officer convicted

FORT MEADE, MARYLAND—The only US officer tried over the abuse scandal at Baghdad's infamous Abu Ghraib jail was cleared on Tuesday of mistreating prisoners there, but found guilty of disobedience in its wake. Lt. Col. Steven Jordan, 51, is the only US officer charged in the abuse scandal which emerged in 2004 when photographs of naked Iraqi prisoners being tormented by grinning US troops circulated around the world. **AFP**

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Bush warns of 'holocaust' in ME

RENO, NEVADA—US PRESIDENT George W. Bush on Tuesday raised the specter of a "nuclear holocaust" in the Middle East if Israel's arch-foe Iran gets atomic weapons, and vowed he would not let that happen.

"Iran's actions threaten the security of nations everywhere, and the United States is rallying friends and allies to isolate Iran's regime, to impose economic sanctions," he told the American Legion veterans group.

"We will confront this danger before it is too late," vowed Bush, who has pressed for tougher international sanctions and said he hopes for a diplomatic solution but has repeatedly refused to rule out the use of force.

Shortly before Bush spoke, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad scoffed at the notion of a US attack on his country dismissed a warning from his new French counterpart, Nicolas Sarkozy, as a symptom of inexperience.

"There is no … possibility of such an attack by the United States," Ahmadinejad told a news conference marked by his characteristic defiance.

"Even if they take such a decision, they cannot implement it," he said.

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush, left, speaks during a fundraiser in Bellevue, Washington, Aug. 27, and his Iranian counterpart Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, right, addresses a press conference in Tehran, Aug. 28. AFP

Sarkozy used a keynote foreign policy address on Monday that the threat of sanctions coupled with an offer of dialogue was the only way of avoiding a "catastrophic alternative: an Iranian bomb or the bombing of Iran." "He only recently came to power and wants to find a place for himself in the world," Ahmadinejad said of the French president. "He is still inexperienced, meaning that maybe he does not really understand the meaning of his own words."

In a speech billed as a defense of the Iraq war, Bush branded Iran "the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism," citing its backing of Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Shiite fighters killing US troops in Iraq.

AFP

US senator arrested in airport toilet

BOISE, IDAHO—REPUBLICAN US SENator Larry Craig said on Tuesday he is not gay and had made a mistake in pleading guilty to disorderly conduct after he was arrested in a men's toilet at a Minnesota airport in June.

First elected to the Senate in 1990, the Idaho senator was arrested by a plainclothes police officer investigating complaints of lewd conduct in the men's public restroom at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

"I am not gay, I never have been gay," Craig told a news conference in Boise, Idaho. He apologized to the people of Idaho for what he said was a "cloud" over the state because of the incident. "I did nothing wrong," he said.

According to a police report cited by the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call, the police investigator, who was in an adjoining stall in the men's room, arrested Craig on June 11 after the senator made gestures with his feet and hand that are common signals used by men soliciting sex.

Reuters

THREE released South Korean hostages sit in a Red Cross vehicle in the city of Ghazni on Aug. 30. REUTERS

Taliban releases 3 S. Korean hostages

GHAZNI, AFGHANISTAN—Taliban insurgents freed three South Korean women hostages on Wednesday, the first of 19 Christian volunteers the Taliban agreed to release. after South Korea said it would pull its troops out of Afghanistan.

Reuters witnesses saw the women being handed over to members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Ghazni province. Wearing long, traditional headscarfs, the women wept as they sat in an ICRC vehicle.

Taliban representative Qari Mohammad Bashir, who was involved in the negotiations that led to the agreement to free the Koreans, said seven more hostages would be freed on Wednesday.

He hoped all would be free in two or three days, he told the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press news agency.

The insurgents seized 23 Korean Christian volunteers on July 19 from a bus in Ghazni province. Two male hostages were killed by their captors early on in the crisis.

The Taliban released two women as a gesture of goodwill during the first round of talks but said on Tuesday they had reached a deal on the release of remaining 19.

South Korea's presidential Blue House said the agreement was on condition it withdraw its troops from Afghanistan within the year and stopped its nationals doing missionary work in Afghanistan.

A spokesperson for South Korea's president, Chon Ho-seon, did not respond to questions at a news briefing in Seoul on Wednesday on whether a ransom was part of the deal but said South Korea had done what was needed.

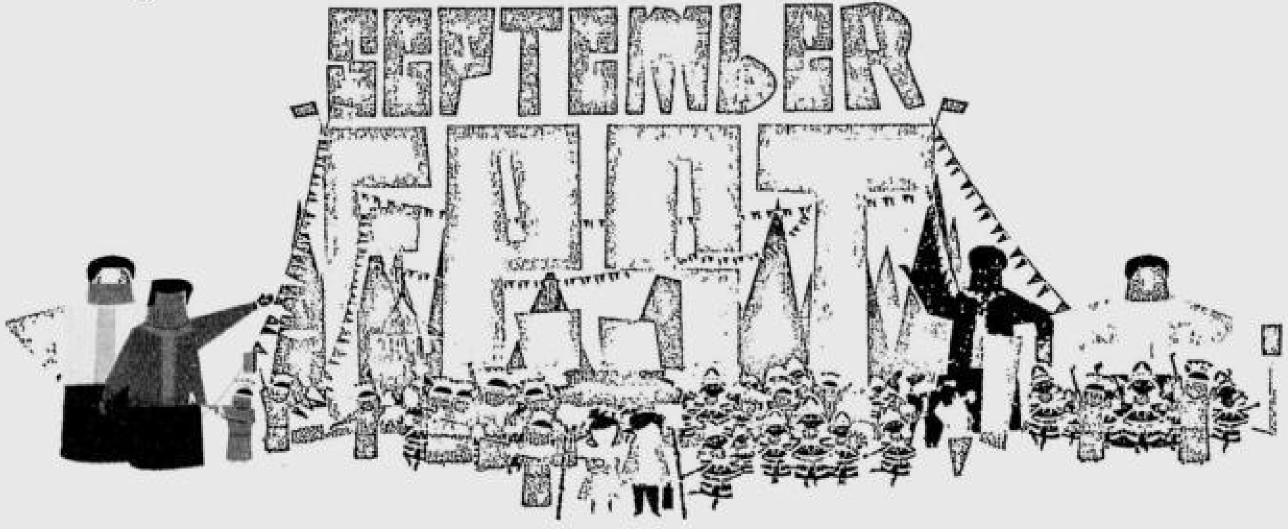
"We believe it is any country's responsibility to respond with flexibility to save lives as long as you don't depart too far from the principles and practice of the international community," Chon said.

South Korea had already decided before the crisis to withdraw its contingent of about 200 engineers and medical staff from Afghanistan by the end of 2007. Since the hostages were taken it has banned its nationals from traveling there.

South Korean missionary groups said they would pull out of Afghanistan to comply with the deal.

Reuters

It's a fiesta!



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WHAT'S INSIDE
Sharapova sparkles in US Open start /A24

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JRU gains NC semis with Mapua in tow

GAMES TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
11:30 a.m.—Jose Rizal vs St. Benilde (Jrs)
2 p.m.—Letran vs San Beda (Jrs)
4 p.m.—Letran vs San Beda (Srs)

By Marc Anthony Reyes

JOSE RIZAL WAS DRAGGED BY SAN SEbastian into overtime before hacking out an 80-73 victory yesterday that boosted the Heavy Bombers—and the idle Mapua Cardinals—into the Final Four of the NCAA men's basketball tournament at The Arena.

Marvin Hayes scored on a undergoal stab in the last 28 seconds to forge overtime, 71-all, before the rest of the Heavy Bombers dominated the five-minute extension to secure their place in the next round with a third-best 7-4 card.

Jose Rizal, which last made the Final Four in 2003, handed Mapua (6-6) the last semifinal seat, since San Sebastian is now out of it at 4-7.

The Red Lions hardly felt the absence of Yousif Aljamal in crushing the Perpetual Altas, 96-79, to improve their leading record to 10-1.

Aljamal was not fielded as promised by San Beda during a press conference Tuesday where it announced withdrawal of a TRO against the league which had wanted to penalize the San Beda star for joining the PBA draft without permission.

San Beda and Letran (8-2), which had earlier clinched the first two semifinal slots, clash tomorrow with the Red Lions also to miss Aljamal in their bid to avenge their only loss so far.

Aljamal will be activated, however, in the Final Four where the Lions already hold a twice-to-win incentive.

The Altas succumbed to their eighth loss in 11 outings.

The scores:

First Game

SAN BEDA 96—Ekwe 26, Escobal 18, Menor 15, Tirona 10, Hermida 6, Lanete 6, Taganas 4, Gamalinda 4, Marcelo 3, Caram 2, Maggay 2, Taupa 0, Padilla 0.

PERPETUAL 79—Balboa 19, Kong 14, Lee 8, Dysam 7, Reyes 6, Manuel 6, Ynion 5, Liaz 5, Febrian 3, Salanga 0, Mejos 0.

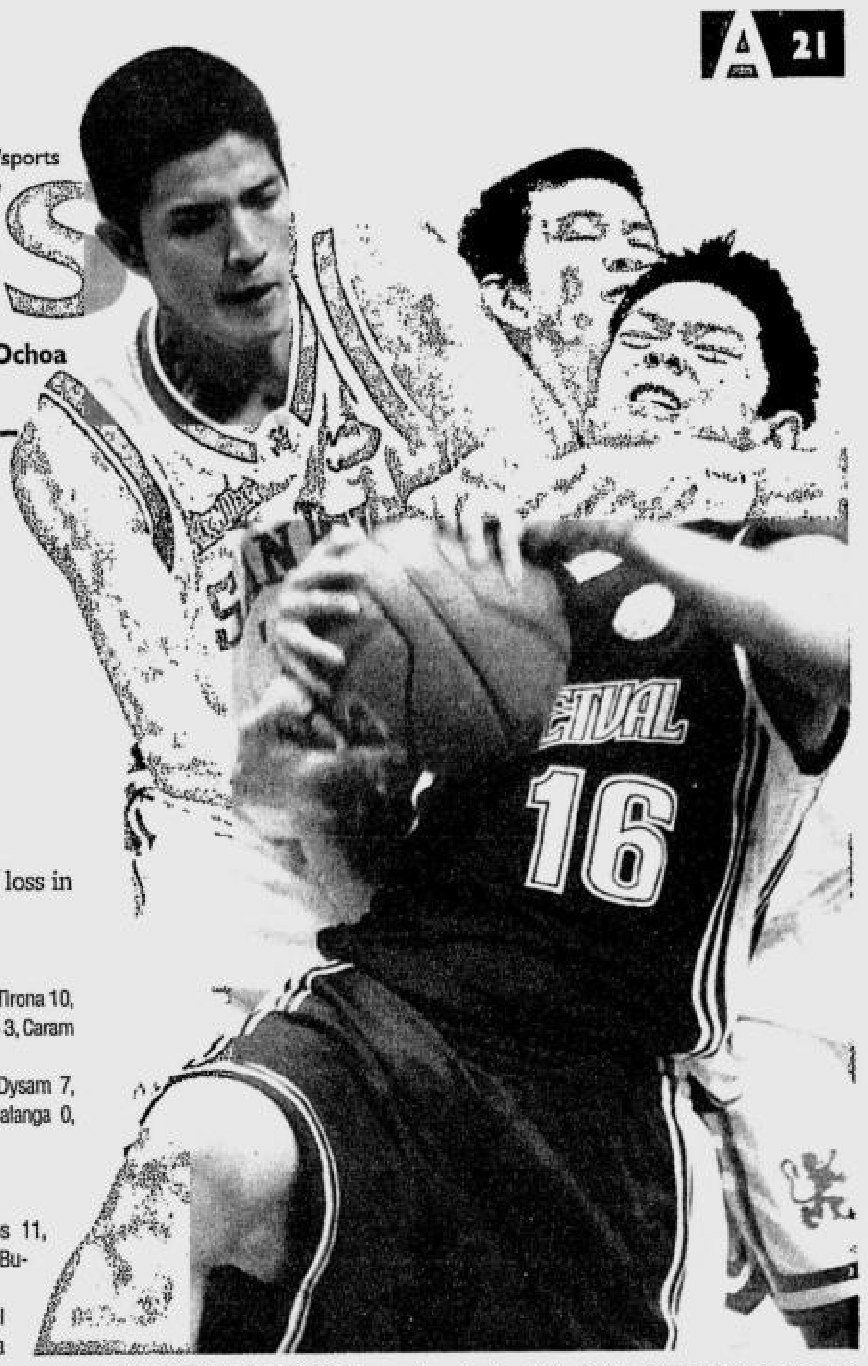
Quarters: 32-21, 54-38, 80-57, 96-79. .

Second Game

JOSE RIZAL 80—Sena 18, Cagoco 13, Hayes 11, Pradas 10, Wilson 10, Nocom 9, Cunanan 5, Agas 2, Bulangis 2, Se 0, Ramos 0, Kabigting 0.

SAN SEBASTIAN 73—Delgado 17, Viray 12, Del Rio 10, Bulawan 10, Aquino 9, Ballesteros 4, Najorda 4, De Leon 4, Quiamco 3, Raymundo 0, Zulueta 0.

Quarters: 23-12, 31-33, 55-58, 71-71 (reg), 80-73



PERPETUAL'S Raffy Ynion gets a taste of life in the Lions' den as he get whacked by two San Beda players in a rebound play. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

PBA teams to suit up 14 players

By Musong R. Castillo

TEAMS WILL HAVE MORE PLAYERS IN THE coming PBA season.

Departing from an age-old practice, each of the 10 teams will now be allowed to suit up 14 players instead of the usual 12 and spend a maximum of P32 million in salaries when the league opens its 33rd season with the Philippine Cup on Oct. 14.

These new rules were approved in the last few days of Noli Eala as commissioner following recent trips to international tournaments with the Philippine Team like the Jones Cup and the Fiba-Asia qualifier in Tokushima, Japan.

But here will be a slight twist that will address some concerns regarding the injured list.

Teams used to freeze good players through the injured list to stop teams from picking them up via free agency—reactivating them depending on need.

This time, teams will be allowed to suit up 14 players, 12 of whom can be used during games, adding a hint of mystery going into every match as to which players a team will use.

Players who get injured will now be allowed to remain in the active roster.

The salary cap is P2 million more than the amount allowed for at least the last four years, though this is what teams basically spend in the past because they continue paying salaries of players who are in the injured list.

Salaries of those players placed on the injured list did not reflect in the cap before and some moneyed teams have that convenience of "freezing" a talent that other teams can readily use.

These new rules will also make it tough for the free agents to find a new team during tournaments, as a new addition to a roster would require a team to drop a similar number in its active list.

But at the same time, these would allow teams to come up with a truly complete lineup and play with a different 12-man rotation for each game.

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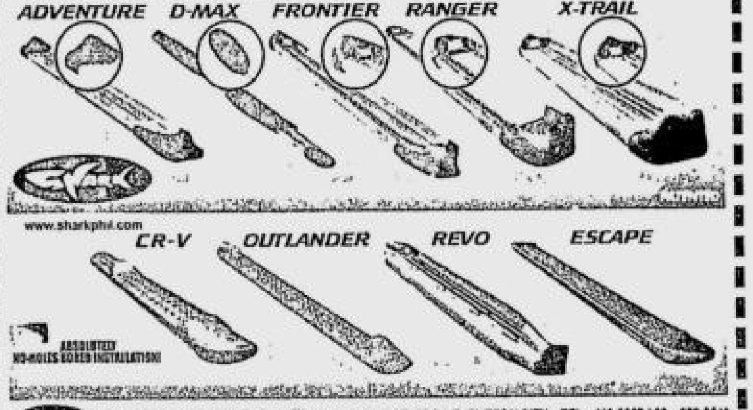

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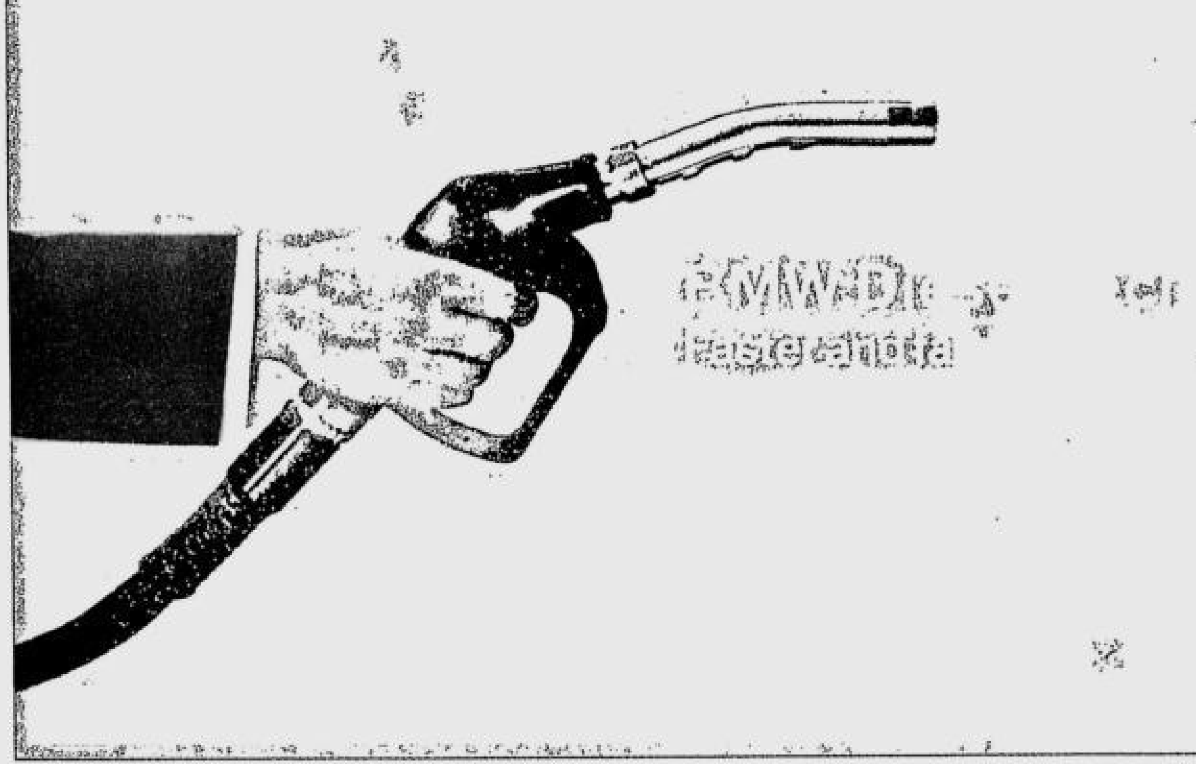

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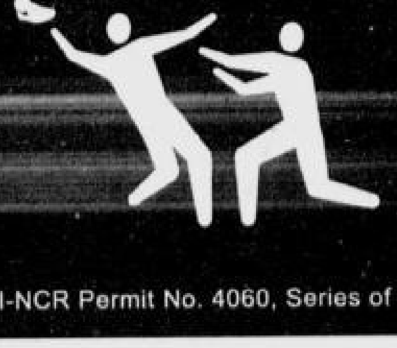

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Maningding tops Touring Car

ULY Maningding cruises under driving rain to grab the lead from Jody Coseteng.

SUBIC—RAINS washed away Uly Maninding's series of misfortunes as he snatched his first big season triumph recently in the fourth leg of the 2007 Philippine Touring Car Championship at the Subic International Raceway.

Maningding's victory snapped the seven-race winning streak of defending champion Jody Coseteng in the event.

Maningding has had all sorts of bad luck in the past races, ranging from hitting the tire barriers, transmission problems and even a loose driver's seat.

In the morning race, he grabbed pole position from Coseteng at the first turn. But then his lead was cut short by computer box problems that forced him to head to the pit.

As a result, Coseteng took his seventh straight victory with Louis and Kookie Ramirez of Petron Ultron-SRA coming in second and third. Dennis Uy of Valvoline-Velocity Motors and Nico Montinola of Akula Racing checked in fourth and fifth, respectively.

But the first wet race of the season proved to be a blessing for Maningding.

Coseteng slowed down due to the risky, slippery track as Maningding wrested the lead with two laps to go and keep it till the end.

Coseteng settled for runner-up place as Louis Ramirez took third. Dennis Uy of Valvoline-Velocity Motors and Nico Montinola of Akula Racing wound up fourth and fifth, respectively.

Vital Tigers-Eagles showdown today

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
2 p.m. FEU vs UP
4 p.m. UST vs Ateneo

ATENEO CAN LIST DOWN THREE reasons why it wants to beat University of Santo Tomas in the UAAP men's basketball competition today.

First, the Blue Eagles can still recall the 2-1 beating they got from the Tigers in last year's finals. Second, the Tigers won their first-round match four weeks ago, 87-74. Third and, most important, Ateneo wants to avoid the possibility of getting bumped off the Final Four.

A repeat win by UST in their 2 p.m. match against Ateneo at the Araneta Coliseum would give this year's host and defending champion a more solid hold on third place at 7-4 while dropping Ateneo to 5-5.

Far Eastern University, in fifth spot at 5-5, would most likely get past Ateneo in the standings after their 4 p.m. game as the Tamaraws have an easier foe in the UP Maroons, who are still winless in nine starts.

"I don't look at the standings anymore," said UST coach Pido Jarencio in Filipino on Sunday after registering their sixth win over National University, 84-72. "What we want to do is sweep our remaining games and we'll take it from there. We'll just see what happens next."

Ateneo coach Norman Black will have to find the right men to contain UST center Jervy Cruz who is averaging 15.9 points per game, Rookie of the Year contender Khasim Mirza, Dylan Ababou and Japs Cuan. *Romina S. Austria*

KART WINNERS: The Philippine kart
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Be an Inquirer.

Draftees from PBL

IN HUDDL

Beth Celis

I WAS SURPRISED THAT PBA chair Tony Chua of Red Bull was not in the PBA office yesterday morning when I called for an interview.

Since he assumed the post from Ricky Vargas in mid-August, Tony has been reporting at the PBA office daily to see to it that everything is running smoothly in the absence of a regular commissioner.

He works in tandem with OIC Sonny Barrios and the different department heads.

***

"I'm lucky to have somebody like Sonny, who has so many years of experience in the job. I'm just there as some some sort of a figurehead. I guess this is the first time a chair does anything like this—report to the PBA office regularly, " said Tony, who was on his way to a meeting involving the PBA when I finally got hold of him.

Although he goes to the PBA office in Libis regularly, Tony said he comes in at different times of the day.

"Sometimes I come in the morning, then leave immediately after lunch. Other times I report in the afternoon, spend the rest of the day there," he said.

The staff at the PBA commissioner's office said they welcome the presence of the chair, since they feel very comfortable with him.

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BUSTAMANTE

GUEVARRA

Joven-Benjie favor

THE TANDEM OF JOVEN Bustamante and Benjie Guevarra heads the field when the first San Miguel Corporation (SMC) Scotch Doubles 10-ball event gets going on Sept. 19, 20 and 21 at the Elbowroom/ Metro Walk in Pasig City.

The 28-year-old Bustamante is fresh from earning one of the four slots allocated in the SMB RP 9-ball Open Baguio leg last Sunday while the 29-year-old Guevarra won the winner-take-all 9-ball in Bowling Inn
enue early this month

Bustamante, of Bu
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of Bronco Stable, are
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Bugsy Lair's Billiard
Quezon City.

Among the players
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Ronato Alcano and
BCA Enjoypool.com
Dennis Orcollo..
Bernardino

Pitgames stag derby Sept. 1

THE PITGAMES showdown 6-stag derby starts on Sept. 1 at San Juan Coliseum with over 150 cockers and breeders taking part. Submission of entries will be tomorrow at SJC office, from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. The three-day event offers a guaranteed prize of P1.5 million. Hosts Danny Ty and Manny Berbano said the 3-stag elimination will start at 1 p.m.

CHAMPION: Pacific Supertex
receive the championship trop
MBT-Danny Espiritu Cup at th
win the title in the event organ

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ing team arrives at the Naia Tuesday
ian Karting Championships in Jakarta,
nd from left) emerged champion in the
Christian Gaddi (left) in the Cadet 60
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ctively.

Patafa axes nat'l mentor Posadas

By June Navarro

JOJO POSADAS, WHO BECAME a national coach as mentor of track legend Elma Muros, was sacked from the Philippine team yesterday.

Acting on a manifesto seeking the ouster of the coach who later became the husband of the now retired Muros, the Patafa executive council removed Posadas from its roster of mentors now preparing the country's bets for the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand this December.

"It pains me to see Jojo go," said Patafa president Go Teng Kok. "He helped the country win several gold medals through Elma and the other athletes he trained."

Go said he asked most of the 36 athletes and coaches who signed the manifesto during a meeting earlier in the day to reconsider their clamor to oust Posadas.

Posadas was suspended two weeks ago after a group of athletes and coaches led by Southeast Asian Games titlists Arnel Ferreira, Maristela Torres, Ernie Candelario and Lerma Baluitan-Gabito lobbied for his ouster.

"It was expected," said Posadas, who is seeking a coaching job in his alma mater Far Eastern University. "Even if they reinstate me,' the relationship will no longer be the same."

Posadas claimed he is a victim of power play, noting that some personalities close to Go wanted his head out of envy.

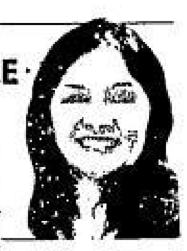
Posadas trained Muros on her way to bagging 11 of the 15 golds she won in the SEAG.

EXPRESS CAGERS: Air21 president and team manager Lito Alvarez (center) shakes hands with Doug Kramer (left) during signing ceremonies at the Air21 Cargohaus in Parañaque. Kramer and JC Intal (right) were signed up to three-year deals by the Express.

4 Pinoys finish Sabah tilt

SABAH, MALAYSIA—A CEBUANA wound up eighth while three other Filipinos were finishers in the 21st Mt. Kinabalu Climbathon held over the weekend in Sabah, Malaysia. Merlita Arias timed 4:55.13 for the 21K uphill-downhill climb in the women's Open division to finish eighth, while Nina Dacanay ended up 22nd. In the men's Open division, Miguel Lopez landed 40th among 127 entries. Triathlon Association of the Philippines secretary general Ramon Marchan placed 26th in the veteran category. Spain's Monica Ubed (3:44.08) topped the women's side.

don't come cheap



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PBL a developmental fee for every player that is drafted and eventually signed up.

The cost, according to PBA operations head Rickie Santos, is P120,000 for every player drafted in the first round, and P50,000 for every player drafted in the second round.

Of course it is assumed that the cager played in the PBL before applying for the draft.

But no fee is involved if a cager is culled from the free agent market.

***

Air21 is scheduled to leave for China next month, making the Express the fifth jetsetting PBA team during the offseason. The others are Sta. Lucia Realty, which is currently competing in the Brunei Cup; Purefoods, which recently flew to Bahrain to participate in an annual mini-series; Alaska which is returning soon from a bonus trip to the United States and Talk 'N Text, which was sent to Florida by team owner Manny V. Pangilinan for further training.

***

DZME Sports Vigilante Teddy Reynoso reports that with Blue Eagle Macky Escalona being signed up by Ginebra, the count is up from 11 to 12 members of the 2002 Ateneo champion team being drafted in the PBA.

By the way, it's Paolo Bugia, the son, and not Chito, the father, who was a member of this champion team. My mistake.

SPORTSWATCH

Citibank, PLDT cop badminton crowns

CITIBANK AND PLDT BAGGED SEPARATE crowns in the 2nd Franzia Serve it Up National Corporate Badminton court in Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City, recently.

Citibank beat Metrobank in three events, 3-0, to clinch the Elite Championship title of the tournament supported by Franzia wine.

PLDT defeated Universal Robina Corporation, 3-0, to bag the Club Championship crown.

The categories played in the two-day team event were Men's doubles, Ladies' Doubles and Mixed Doubles.

Ateneo spikers prevail

THE ATENEO SPIKERS SUBDUED TEAM Batasan Hills, 25-21, 25-21, on Monday in the Petron Treats Boys' Volleyball League at the Colegio de San Lorenzo Sports Complex in Quezon City.

Batasan Hills led most of the time during both sets until the tandem of Tommy Rivera and John Pareja spearheaded a rally by the Clint Malazo-mentored Ateneo to level the count at 20 in both sets. St. Joseph's College stunned San Lorenzo Ruiz, 14-25, 25-22, 25-19, while Lourdes School Mandaluyong trounced Philippine Institute of Quezon City, 25-22, 19-25, 25-10. *Marlon Bernardino*

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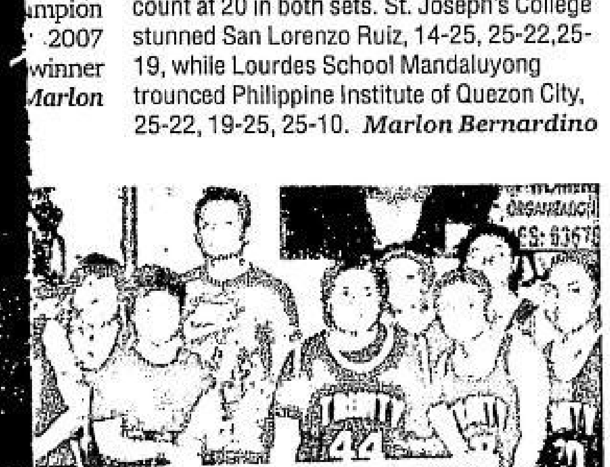
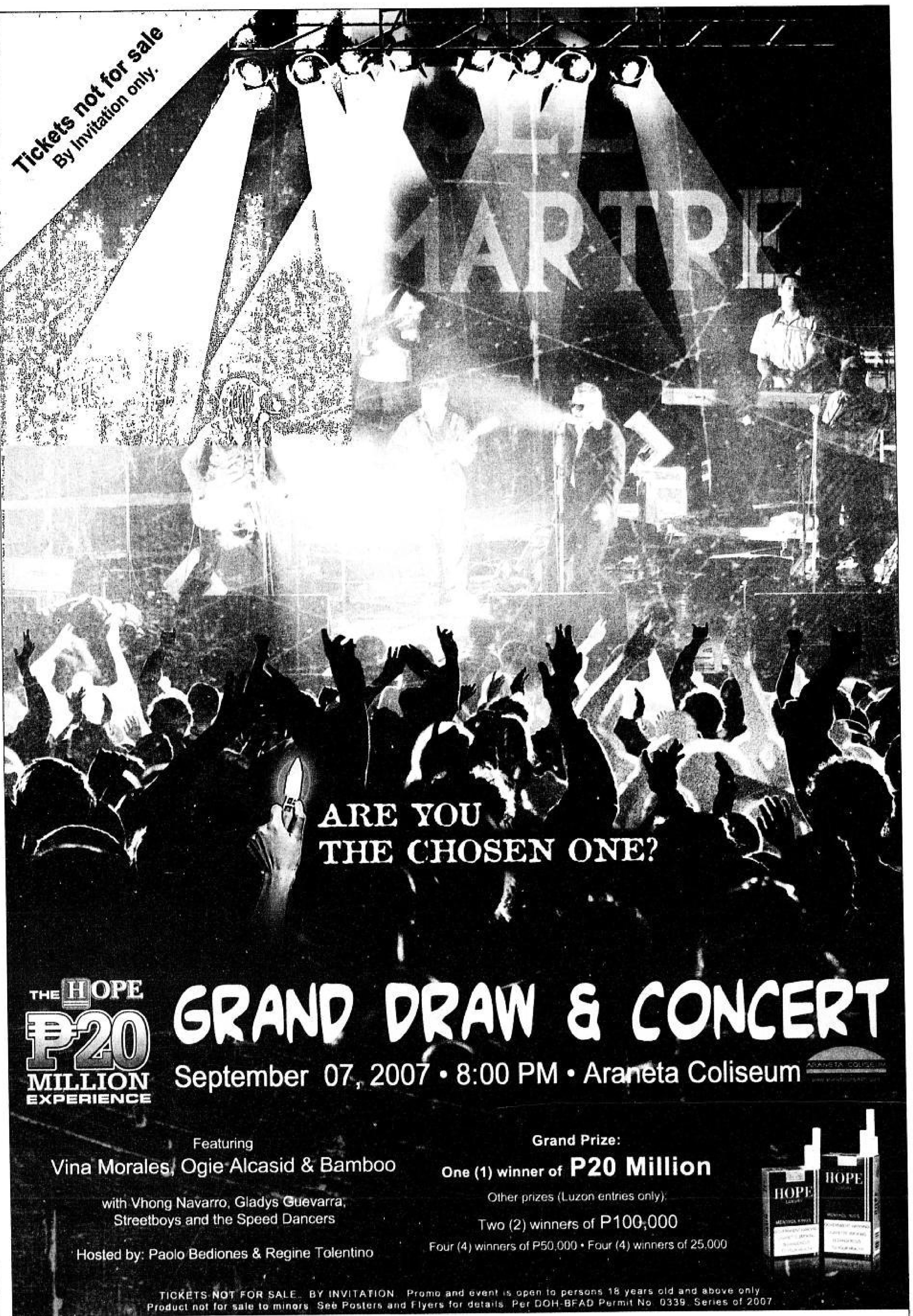


IGHTY

Creative Kings owners Scott Go and James Cafe
hy from Danny Espiritu after topping the recent 2007
RTU gym in Mandaluyong City. The Kings beat 168 to
ized by MBT under Commissioner Nilo C. Fernandez.



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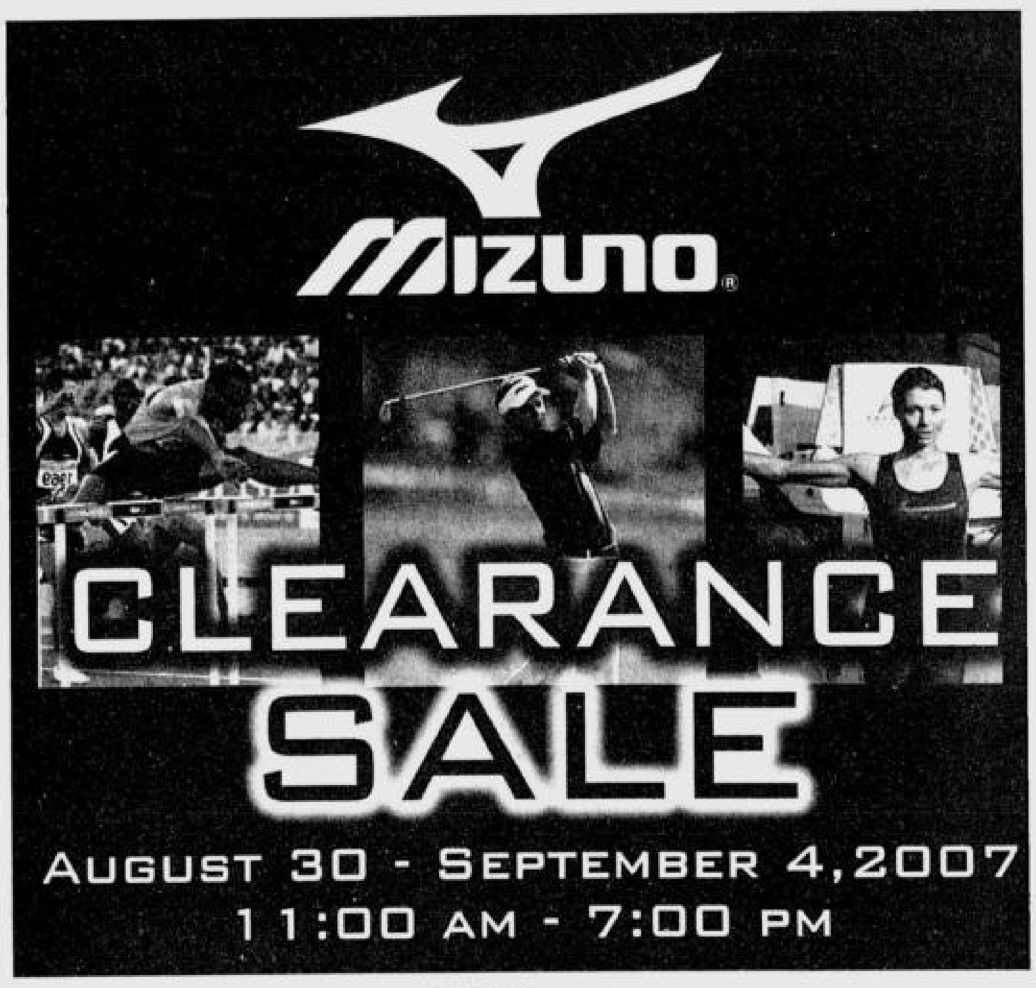
Sharapova sparkles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'The bomb' opens title defense by blasting foe

SHARAPOVA: Dazzling
REUTERS

NEW YORK—MARIA SHARAPOVA SHANKED a backhand wide, prompting her opponent to leap in the air and pump her fist and smile as though she won the match—or, indeed, the US Open.

Uh, not quite. That little celebration by 51st-ranked Roberta Vinci of Italy was for winning one game on Tuesday, allowing her to narrow Sharapova's lead to 6-0, 5-1.

"I win one game, I'm happy," Vinci said. "6-love, 6-love? No. 6-love, 6-1? OK."

A few minutes and one hold of serve later, Sharapova's 50-minute day was done and she was into the second round at the tournament where she produced her second Grand Slam title a year ago.

"There's no way to get rid of the memories when I walk on the court and feel the vibe," the second-seeded Russian said, 600 crystals on her red dress sparkling in the Arthur Ashe Stadium lights. "Every corner I turn here, I get goose bumps."

Her dazzling play matched her eye-catching attire on Tuesday as the Russian opened the defense of her US Open crown in impeccably stylish fashion.

Andy Roddick followed Sharapova on court and beat Justin Gimelstob, 7-6 (6), 6-3, 6-3.

It was the 30-year-old Gimelstob's last match as a pro, and Roddick hugged him at the net afterward.

About the biggest problem Sharapova had was when she missed a sip of water during a changeover and spilled a spot on her custom-made outfit.

Even Vinci took note of the get-up, saying: "It's difficult to play against her. Strong player. Nice girl. She has a nice dress."

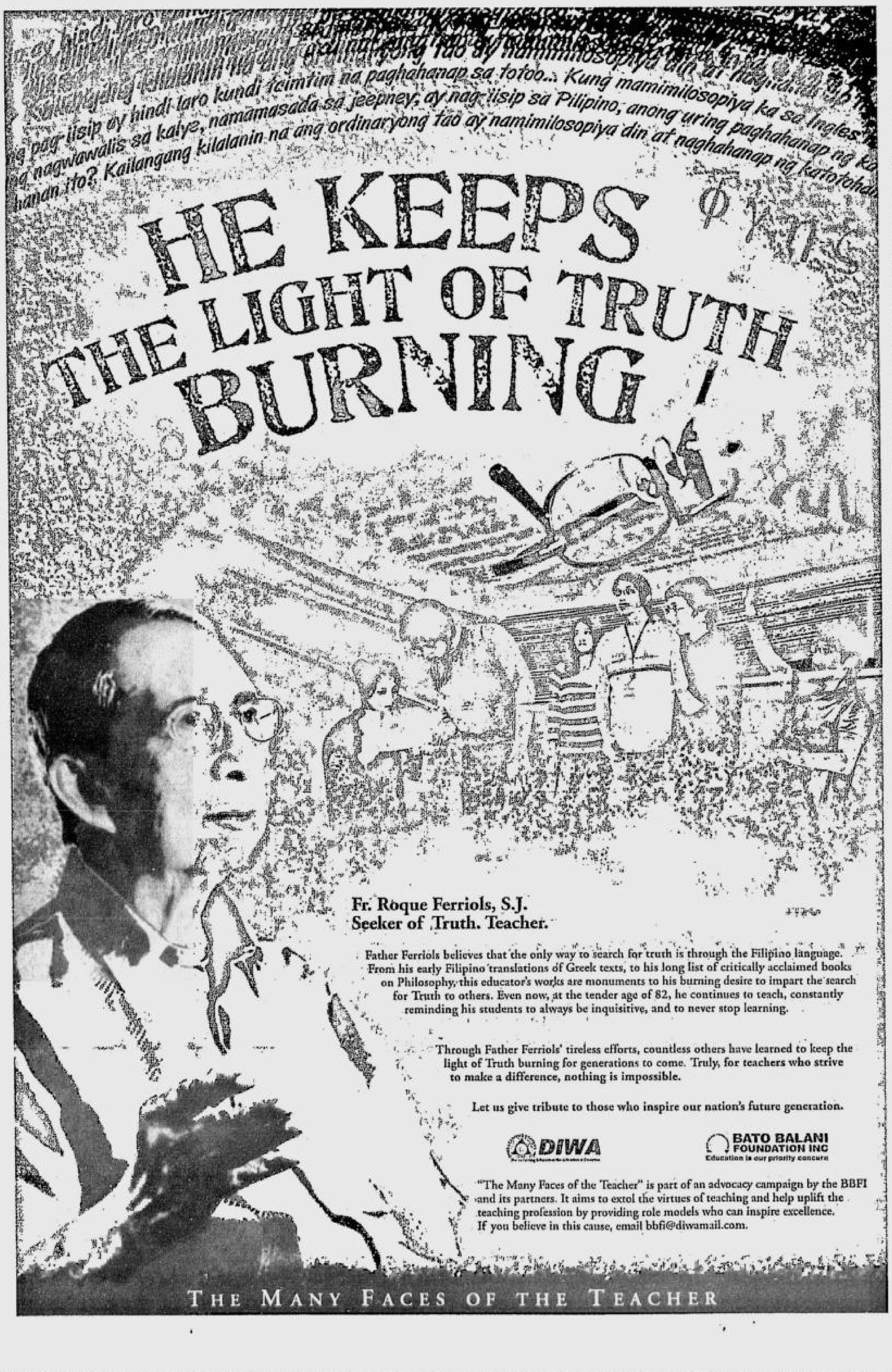
"Put on a nice outfit, and some makeup, and you're the bomb," Sharapova noted.

Sharapova's good feelings from her US Open title are still fresh, but it's been a decade since Martina Hingis won the tournament. This year, Hingis took a stroll around the new workout room and simply had to smile while scanning the enlarged photos decorating the walls.

There among the posters of previous champions is one of Hingis, clutching her 1997 silver trophy, a different player and a different person.

"I'm like, 'OK, I look really young.' Short haircut, all that. It's been 10 years," she said. "Sometimes it feels like yesterday, sometimes like a lifetime."

Hingis trounced Mathilde Johansson, 6-0, 6-3. Others winners included No. 3-seeded Novak Djokovic, and No. 6 James Blake. The day's biggest early surprise came when No. 9 Daniela Hantuchova, a past US Open quarterfinalist, was eliminated by 50th-ranked Julia Vakulenko, 6-4, 3-6, 6-1. *AP*



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THE MANY FACES OF THE TEACHER

Fernando stays ahead by 1 shot

By Musong R. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—ANTHONY Fernando shot a one-under-par 71 despite another 18th-hole misadventure to keep the lead in the NGAP Qualifier at the Riviera's Couples layout here.

The 24-year-old from Zamboanga bogeyed the final hole but stayed ahead of a new pursuer with a 140 total after two rounds of the 144-hole event.

Jonel Ababa, the first National Caddies Open champion, sizzled with a day-best 69 to take second with a 141 aggregate, two ahead of Mark Fernando, Anthony's cousin, who pooled a 73.

Hotshot Jay Bayron again churned out a steady round, shooting a quiet level 72 for 146 in a tie with Ferdinand Aunzo, who shot a 70 despite bogeys in two of his last four holes.

Michael Bibat, the bronze medal winner in the 2004 Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, rebounded from a first round 75 with a 72 to be at 147, with Gene Bondoc shooting a second straight 74 for 148 and solo seventh spot.

The 23-year-old Ababa made the turn at an even 36 after a birdie on No. 3 and a missed-green bogey in the next. But he almost turned the back nine upside down by picking up three shots in a six-hole stretch.

"Maybe I was just lucky," Ababa, an ex-caddie, told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

KOBE Bryant, who is set to visit the country on Sept. 5 and visit kids under the care of the Eliseo Belen Charity, soars for an undergoal stab for Team USA against Puerto Rico at the Fiba Americas tournament. Bryant will also hold a clinic while in the Philippines.
REUTERS

Argentina, US fives keep records clean

LAS VEGAS—CARLOS DELFINO scored nine points in Argentina's game-opening 22-4 run and the South Americans remained unbeaten with an 85-70 victory over Canada in the second round of the Americas championship on Tuesday.

Also, the United States downed Puerto Rico, 117-78, Venezuela beat Uruguay, 88-79, and Brazil downed Mexico, 104-90.

While the US has been drawing the attention on its home soil with its roster of NBA stars, Argentina just keeps winning in hopes of securing one of the two berths from this competition for the Beijing Olympics.

"This was our second-most important game of the tournament to not play the US in the semifinals," Delfino said. "We played good because we knew this was our second final."

The key game will be against Brazil on Wednesday. The game against the US on Thursday to close the second round won't matter. Argentina will have already clinched second place and that means avoiding the US in the semifinals and a better chance at tabbing an Olympic bid. *AP*

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■ **Breaktime:** Cigarette case /B4

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Peso slips further to 46.83 to a dollar

Analysts see currency breaching 47 level soon

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY FALTERED AGAINST THE DOLLAR, nearly touching the 47:$1 barrier, as regional currencies were again battered by global investors' growing concern over a US economic slowdown.

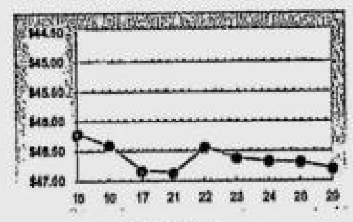
The local currency yesterday opened at 46.99 and hit an intraday low of 46.81 before closing at 46.83 against the dollar at the Philippine Dealing System. It shed 12 centavos from Tuesday's closing of 46.71.

A double whammy caused by reports that consumer confidence in the US had fallen to its lowest level this year and another report showing that excess US housing supply had reached its highest in more than 15 years in July again spooked investor

PESO/ B5

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



AUGUST

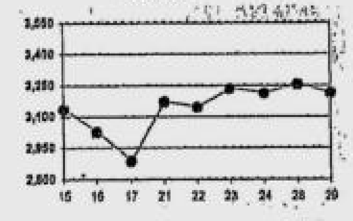
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 46.83 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 29, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX
AUGUST



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks close 1.3% lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.3-PERCENT lower yesterday as investors took their cue from a sharp slide on Wall Street overnight, and subsequent falls in Asian markets, dealers said.

They said this came after the US market was hit by further gloomy economic data, showing consumer confidence in August at its lowest ebb in a year.

The release of the minutes from the last Federal Reserve policy meeting on Aug. 7, which appeared to douse hopes for a near-term cut in key rates, also punished sentiment in the US.

The composite index closed down 42.24 points at 3,209.53, off the day's low of 3,171.73. The broader all-share index ended down 30.62 points at 2,045.29.

Out of 156 stocks traded, 105 fell and only 12 advanced, while 35 finished unchanged. Volume amounted to 2.1 billion shares, worth P3.9 billion.

"Lingering subprime concerns clearly affected US consumer confidence and this weighed on sentiment today," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

The negative data disappointed investors who were hoping that the financial turmoil is subsiding after central banks were quick to inject liquidity into their banking systems, said Irving Ackerman, president of I. Ackerman and Co. *AFP*

Environment, infra projects get $58-M fund

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES IS SET TO RECEIVE $57 million in financial assistance from the World Bank and another $1 million from the Japanese government to help fund environment- and infrastructure-related projects.

The World Bank is providing a $50-million loan to fund the National Program Support for Environment and Natural Resources Management.

The loan will provide budgetary support for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in carrying out its mandate to manage and protect the country's natural resources and the environment.

"Much needs to be done to institute reforms in the DENR for it to efficiently and effectively protect, conserve, and manage the coastal, soil, water, mineral and biodiversity resources of the Philippines. This project comes at a very opportune time for the DENR," said newly appointed Environment Secretary Jose Atienza.

The other $7 million from the World Bank will come in the form of a grant and will be used to fund programs related to the management of watershed and wetlands and implemented through coordination among local government units, the national government and people's organizations.

The $1-million grant from the Japan Policy and Human Resources Development Fund will be used to fund preparatory work for the Cavite-Laguna North-South Expressway project, which will be implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The infrastructure project is aimed at easing traffic along Aguinaldo Highway and Coastal Road.

ENVIRONMENT/ B4

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UCPB helps coco farmers make use of waste materials

By Amy R. Remo

THE FOUNDATION OF THE UNITED Coconut Planters Bank has introduced a technology to help small coconut farmers make use of waste indigenous materials.

The Korean Natural Farming Technology enables farmers to manufacture their own organic fertilizer, pesticides and feeds using raw materials abundant in their farms.

These include rice husks, leaves, coconut husks and animal manure, which are usually just thrown away.

According to UCPB, the technology is known for its cost-effectiveness and conformity with sustainable development practices.

The technology is now being tested in Quezon, Oriental Mindoro, Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes and Sorsogon.

Five coconut farmers' cooperatives in Compostela Valley, Davao City, Davao del Norte and Cebu have also started training under the UCPB-Coconut Industry Investment Fund Foundation on the Korean technology.

"Our goal is to introduce the coconut farmers to better and more cost-effective farming techniques so they can become more productive," UCPB-CIIFF president Edgardo Amistad said in a statement.

The program is expected to maximize the availability of cheap resources to coconut farmers, particularly fertilizers and pesticides, especially since the prices of fossil fuel-based chemical fertilizers have ballooned.

According to the Philippine Coconut Authority, it costs about P5,000 to fertilize one hectare of land planted to coconut.

Shipping project gets perks

Listed Lorenzo Shipping plans cargo service

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS has granted tax perks and other incentives to publicly listed Lorenzo Shipping Corp.'s P486-million cargo vessel project. .

BOI data show that the all-Filipino firm will operate a 5,998-metric ton cargo vessel, which would provide interisland cargo liner services to local companies.

The vessel will ply the Manila-Cebu-Dumaguete-Zamboanga route and vice-versa, to carry containerized cargoes for domestic trade.

The project cost will cover pre-operating expenses, improvement and conduction of the vessel, capital equipment, as well as working capital.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange filed last June, Lorenzo Shipping said it was buying a 11-year-old vessel from Black Tetra Shipping of Malta for $8.3 million.

According to the BOI, the project qualified for fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, like tax holidays, due to the Investment Priorities Plan's provisions for the domestic shipping sector.

Lorenzo Shipping is engaged solely in domestic interisland cargo liner services and will maintain a fleet of seven vessels as it bought the new vessel to replace an older one.

The company's vessels, deployed to the key ports of Visayas and Mindanao, have a capacity ranging from 200 twenty-foot equivalent units to 400 TEUs.

Also, BOI has approved the granting of incentives to Filinvest Land Inc.'s P94-million, low-cost mass housing project in Calamba, Laguna.

The development, called Aldea Real, will have 404 units in an 11.3-hectare parcel of land in Barangay Bubuyan, Calamba.

This is Filinvest's second low-cost, mass housing project, following a P97-million project in Santo Tomas, Batangas.

Aldea Real started commercial operation last July and would employ 365 workers during construction.

Publicly listed and 60-percent Filipino-owned, Filinvest Land is one of the country's leading full-range residential property developers, engaged in the development and sale of residential property, primarily housing units and subdivision lots.

The company taps the low-income to high end of residential market with its socialized housing units, other low-income or affordable housing units, middle income housing units, upper-end residential subdivision lot and housing units such as townhouses.

Vulcan, ATN sign mining deal

PUBLICLY-LISTED VULCAN INDUSTRIAL and Mining Corp. said it had signed on Tuesday a memorandum of agreement with ATN Holdings Inc. to develop mineral resources in Isabela.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Vulcan EVP and general manager Patrick V. Caoile said the MOA would be "for the prospecting and development of uranium resources in Isabela."

Under the MOA, ATN would examine and explore for uranium within Vulcan's mining claims in Isabela.

After the exploration work and commercial viability study, ATN and Vulcan would determine the details of the subsequent development work.

ATN and Vulcan are expected to decide through their mutual judgment and within the terms and conditions of the MOA.

This would include the "creation of a joint venture company that will be in charge of the acquisition and operation of facilities for the mining, recovery, benefaction and sale of uranium and such other derivative products as may be mined from the Isabela tenements."

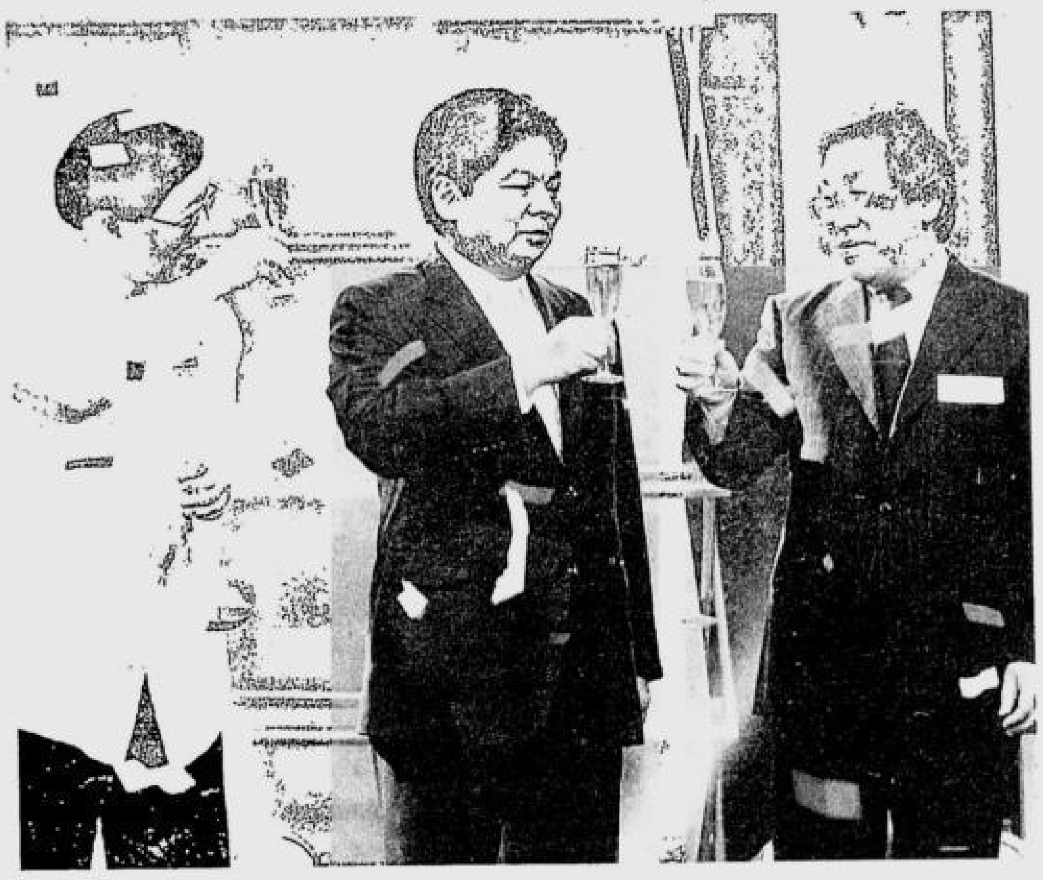
Vulcan earlier said it planned to raise as much as P600 million by selling new shares to a third party to finance the firm's investments and debt repayment program.

Funds would be raised through a 1:1 equity private placement to Anglo Philippine Holdings Corp., a holding firm with interests in real estate, infrastructure and energy projects.

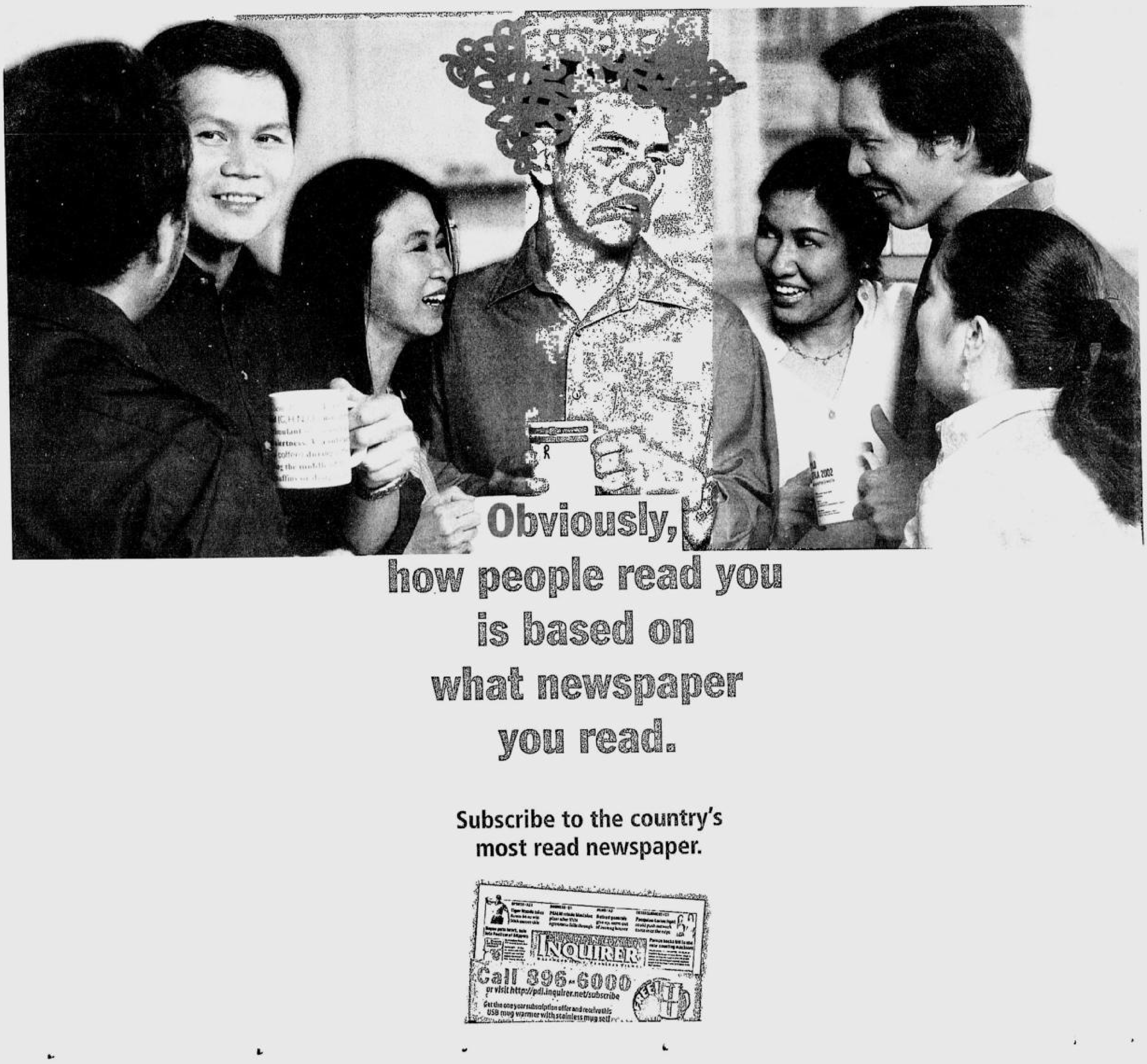
Vulcan said the proceeds of the private placement would be used over a five-year period.

It added that the 600 million in new shares would be issued for the transaction at P1 each, with 25 percent immediately due for payment by the investor, while the balance may be "called" by the firm's board of directors at an unspecified date.

Amy R. Remo



BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas governor Amando Tetangco, Jr. (center) joins Toyota Financial Services Philippines Corp. as it celebrates five years of doing business in the country. He is flanked by Metrobank Group chair George S.K. Ty (left) and Toyota Financial Services Corporation president Hideto Ozaki during the ceremonial toast.



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US subprime woes seen to eat into RP banks' profits

Credit-linked notes invested in RP bonds

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL MARKET volatility triggered by the US credit crunch is seen depressing Philippine banks' treasury gains and eating into overall profitability for the third quarter.

And the pressure is not coming not from collateralized debt obligations (CDOs), but from another type of structured product called credit-linked notes that are heavily invested in the Philippine government's foreign currency-denominated bonds or ROPs.

"The problem is with these CLNs whose valuations have gone down and this will be reflected when we do the marking-to-market," one banker said.

"The first semester is good but the third quarter is really bad," the banker said.

CDOs are a type of security backed by assets and a structured credit product which serve as an important funding vehicle for portfolio investments in risky assets like the subprime mortgage market in the United States.

Although CDOs comprise less than 2 percent of the banking system's total assets based on Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas data, the sector has a big exposure to many other instruments that are heavily invested in ROPs.

Poor market sentiment triggered by the problematic subprime mortgage market in the US has weighed down on the values of ROPs and other emerging market IOUs.

"There will surely be an impact on profitability but how big or how large the impact will be, the BSP still has to evaluate that," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

"But as the market digests all the news, their action in the end will be to go back to fundamentals," he said.

With the country's improved fiscal position, rising foreign reserves and external surpluses which indicate a capability to repay foreign obligations, he said foreign investors would again warm up to Philippine investments.

Offering some relief from turbulent global markets and tougher banking regulations, the Philippine government is drawing up a new mechanism to help domestic holders of ROPs shift to peso assets.

The conversion scheme aims to keep the ROPs attractive to residents, especially to the banking system's foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs) given this year's implementation by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas of stiffer capital adequacy requirements, Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said.

He noted that the national government and the BSP were now working together to study the dollar-to-peso risk conversion mechanism, which will be unlike global bond swaps pursued in the past. The government hopes to finalize and implement the scheme within this year.

Based on estimates by the International Monetary Fund last year, more than 80 percent of domestically held ROPs were with the banking system.

The high "home bias" or domestic ownership of foreign currency bonds issued by the government has somehow reduced the volatility of ROPs over the years but the same exposure could cause potential balance sheet vulnerabilities in times of offshore market turmoil, the IMF had warned.

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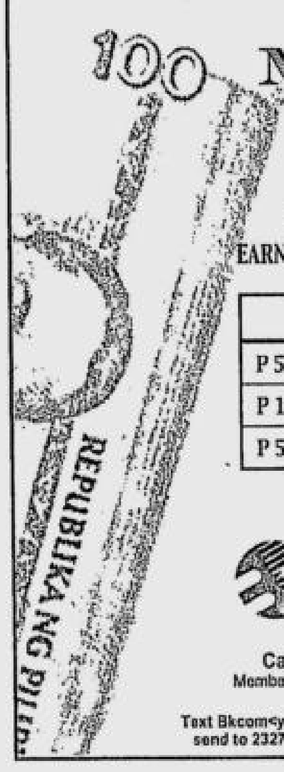

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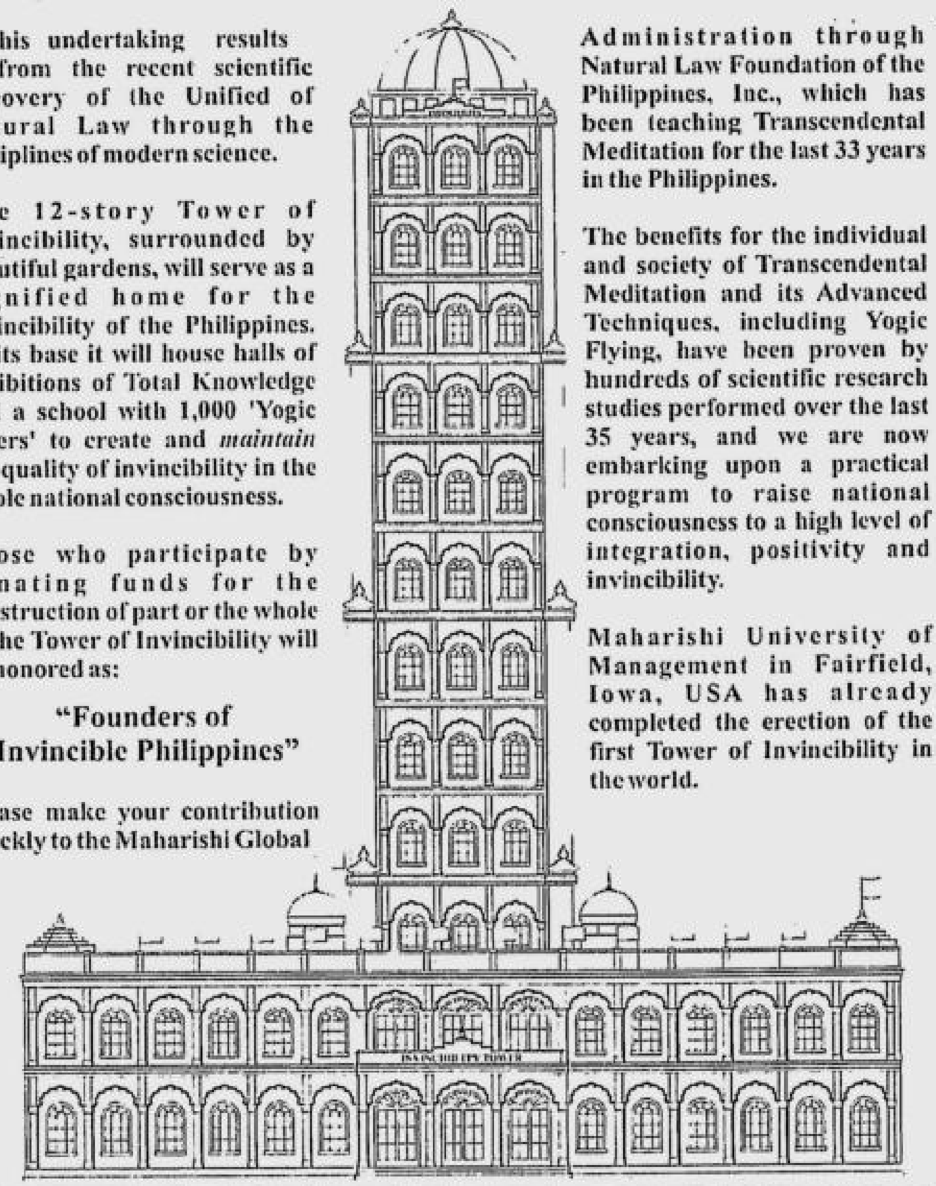

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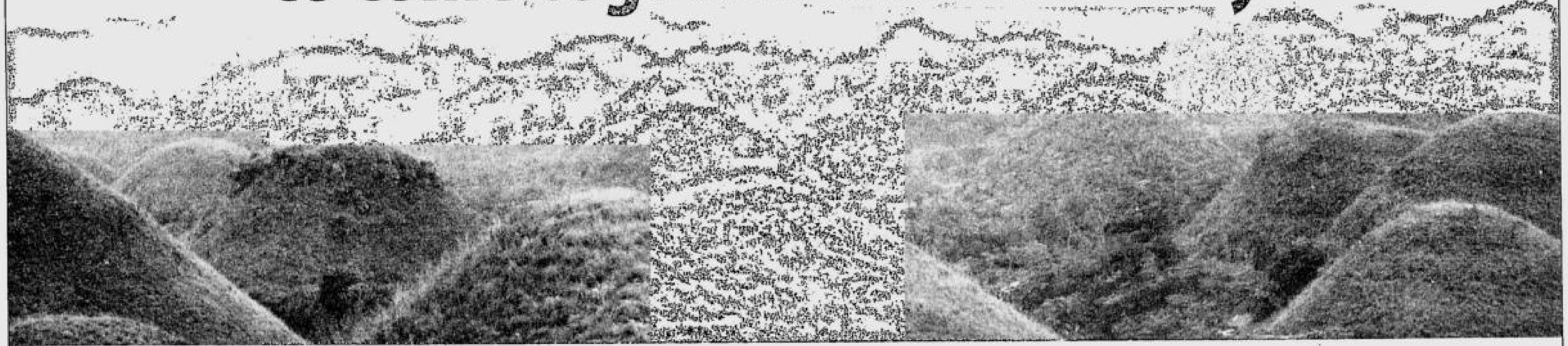
What does it take for Filipinos to come together the same way?



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Entertainment outfit Viva to go public in November

Plans to raise P1.5B for expansion

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

MOVIE AND ENTERTAINMENT GIant Viva Communications Inc. is going public, possibly by November this year, INQUIRER sources said.

INQUIRER sources said the planned initial public offering, which is targeted to raise about P1.5 billion, will help Viva Com acquire new technology to meet the growing demand for content in various formats.

Viva Com was established in 1981 to consolidate the Viva Group of Companies' dominant position as the leading provider of entertainment content for Filipino audiences in various media here and abroad.

Viva Com is composed of film production arm Viva Productions Inc., talent development and management company Viva Artists' Agency and home video distributor Viva Video Inc.

BDO Capital and Investment Corp. recently agreed to underwrite or manage the public offer. The company has also tapped ONL Consultants Inc. as financial adviser.

Aside from being the premier provider of entertainment content for Filipino audiences, Viva Com produces motion pictures, licenses archived film material, manages artists and distributes home video products in DVD and VCD formats.

It is also the owner of the biggest library of Filipino films with nearly 2,000 Viva-produced and acquired film and television clips.

The company has a presence in all aspects of the content distribution chain, releasing material through theaters, free TV, domestic and foreign pay TV, live productions and new media outlets such as mobile phone television and SMS or MMS.

Viva Com has also produced more than 400 films and television shows. Among the film actors it managed and discovered were Sharon Cuneta, Regine Velazquez, Robin Padilla, Andrew E. and Sarah Geronimo.

The company also began producing movies in 1981 with the Sharon Cuneta starrer "P.S. I Love You." It has also produced the "Bagets" teen-flicks, which launched the careers of film actors Aga Muhlach and Herbert Bautista. The company's television show, "Star for a Night," also discovered Sarah Geronimo and served as a precursor to talent shows on network TV today.

Viva Com was also the first to air game shows during prime time such as "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" and "The Weakest Link."

Increased penetration of cable TV and the growth in the number of mobile phone and Internet users created new content delivery channels such as pay TV, mobile phone TV, MMS and SMS messaging, which augmented traditional channels such as theaters, free TV and home video. Entertainment content can now also be viewed online via the Internet.

It is estimated that nontheatrical revenues now account for at least 15 percent of the total revenue generated by a single film, industry sources said.

Industry sources also said demand for Filipino content has expanded beyond local shores to overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

In 2006, about 2 percent of Viva Com's licensing revenues were from international sales. This figure is expected to grow as subscriptions to Viva Com's Filipino movie channel, Pinoy Box Office, increase in areas where the channel is currently available such as Europe, Japan, the Middle East and the US, and as the channel's reach expands beyond these countries.

The Viva Group is led by its chair and chief executive, Vic Del Rosario Jr., who cofounded Vicor Music Corp. when he was 19 years old.

Cigarette case

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

NOBODY SAID THAT IT'S A SIN FOR our top government officials to be seen in the company of executives of foreign multinational groups.

It's just plain suspicious, that's all!

That includes the dinner for the Lola at the Palace there in London during her official trip early this year, hosted by British American Tobacco, or BAT, the world's second biggest cigarette company.

Today, we happen to know that BAT has been lobbying this administration for a huge tax reduction on its "Pall Mall" brand of cigarettes, from P25 per pack to P5.60 per pack, or an amazing 80-percent discount.

The question is, who in heaven's name dumped the President of the Republic into such a rather compromising situation?

Based on whispers among Cabinet members, the free dinner was arranged by none other than another Cabinet member. Oops!

Did he inform the Lola at the Palace about the strong lobby of BAT to reduce substantially its tax payments in this country?

Or for that matter, did the Lola at the Palace know that the same BAT wanted the Supreme Court to declare the "sin tax law" as unconstitutional, which happened to be one of the main revenue-generating measures of the Arroyo administration?

If BAT wins the case before the Supreme Court, this administration will surely get crippled. I mean, did our beloved Cabinet member even think about that?

* * *

Also sometime ago, during the yearly excise tax conference among Asean members held in Singapore, one of our gallant congressmen was seen in the company of the PR hired by BAT here in the Philippines.

The same congressman, who is no longer in the legislature today, was also said to have been instrumental in tax measures of this administration in Congress.

What do you know—talk in business circles has it that the same lucky son of his mother was also instrumental in the new ruling by the Department of Finance, which happens to be favorable to BAT's "Pall Mall" brand of cigarettes.

Nothing is wrong there, sure!

* * *

BAT, plus its supposed local licensee La Suerte Cigar and Cigarette Factory, can wage all the PR campaigns that they want, but they still cannot deny that a news report came out in London on that suspicious DOF ruling.

According to BIR insiders, the DOF ruling in effect reversed the BIR on the "Pall Mall" case, in which La Suerte and BAT asked the BIR to lower the excise tax on that particular cigarette brand.

Here is a direct quote from the news report:

"BAT has scored an unexpected legal victory in the Philippines over the excise classification of Pall Mall, one of the company's cluster of global key brands.

"BAT is understood to have been notified late last month that its appeal against a ruling by the Philippines' Bureau of Internal has been successful.

"The British company has argued that the previous excise ruling—which levied tax on a pack of Pall Mall cigarettes valued at almost double the retail price—should be significantly lower."

There—that's part of the report in the Sunday Telegraph by a certain Mark Kelinman, which came out last Aug. 4.

Now, our sources in BIR said that the bureau only got a copy of the reported "legal victory" only last Aug. 9.

And what was that the news report said about BAT's being notified in July?

Was it only a case of advanced info?

Sure, and the Pope is also my father!

* * *

Based on their position paper submitted to the BIR, La Suerte and BAT wanted the tax cut because "Pall Mall" is now produced locally.

As a background, the BIR ruled that the excise on "Pall Mall" should be P25 per pack because this was the rate imposed on the "blue seal" (i.e., imported) "Pall Mall" cigarettes sold at the Philippine Duty Free.

In effect, La Suerte and BAT argued that the locally produced "Pall Mall" is priced much lower than the imported cigarettes of the same brand.

And so, the excise tax should be based on the lower price for the local.

Well and good!

Still, the BIR legal department, which submitted its findings on the "Pall Mall" case to ousted BIR commissioner Jose Mario Buñag, has an interesting retort to that argument raised by BAT and La Suerte.

And that is, the price difference between the local and the imported "Pall Mall" is too humongous to be believed.

Through field surveys, the BIR was able to determine that the imported "Pall Mall" was priced at about P35 per pack—without the excise tax.

In comparison, the local "Pall Mall" (as claimed by BAT and La Suerte) was priced at less than P5 per pack.

Here's what the BIR legal service had to say on that:

"Considering that all brand owners, including BAT in the instant case, needs to protect the image and quality of its products, as well as to preserve and enhance the international reputation of their trade marks ... it is very alarming that such a discrepancy in costs will arise."

Thus, the BIR legal service recommended a "thorough investigation" of the huge price difference.

Why—the difference is only a fantastic 600 percent! What's so mysterious about that?

Environment ...

From page B1

"This project will also help create an enabling environment for private sector participation (in the government's efforts to boost the economy)," the World Bank said in a statement.

The project includes the construction of a six-lane, 27.2-kilometer expressway connecting Bacoor and Dasmariñas in Cavite, and the linkage between the Manila-Cavite Coastal Road to the proposed East-West Cavite-Laguna Expressway.

The Philippine government is holding talks with the World Bank on possible funding of the project's implementation itself. Total project cost is estimated at $278 million (about P12.5 billion).

The Japanese government is the Philippines' biggest source of official development assistance while the World Bank is the third-biggest following the Asian Development Bank.

As of December last year, the Philippines' outstanding ODA liabilities stood at $9.5 billion. Of the amount, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation accounted for the biggest share of 49 percent or $4.7 billion. The ADB followed with 19 percent or $1.8 billion.

CURRENCIES

August 29, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.735024	1.000000	46.6980
Japan	Yen	0.006435	0.008755	0.4088
United Kingdom	Pound	1.470268	2.000300	93.4100
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.094245	0.128220	5.9876
Switzerland	Franc	0.611959	0.832570	38.8794
Canada	Dollar	0.690423	0.939320	43.8644
Singapore	Dollar	0.481762	0.655437	30.6076
Australia	Dollar	0.602775	0.820075	38.2959
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.949872	2.652801	123.8805
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.195985	0.266638	12.4515
Brunei	Dollar	0.480188	0.653296	30.5076
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000078	0.000106	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.022547	0.030675	1.4325
UAE	Dirham	0.200143	0.272294	12.7156
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.360500	63.5326
Korea	Won	0.000782	0.001064	0.0497
China	Yuan**	0.097270	0.132336	6.1798
Denmark	Kroner	0.134351	0.182785	8.5357
India	Rupee	0.017940	0.024408	1.1398
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.210488	0.286369	13.3729
New Zealand	Dollar	0.516495	0.702691	32.8143
Sweden	Kroner	0.106545	0.144955	6.7691
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022268	0.030296	1.4148

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Aug. 28, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Aug. 28, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 29, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	9.5	9.5	9	9.5	26,000
73	35	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	55.5	55.5	54	54.5	948,900
73.5	52	Bank of the Philippine Islands	58.5	58.5	57.5	58	1,524,700
935	630	China Banking Corp.	810	815	810	815	2,620
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	1,300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.38	2,550,000
75.5	37	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	53	54	52.5	53.5	5,244,200
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	45	45.5	44	45.5	713,000
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	63.5	63.5	63.5	63.5	500
39.57	14.57	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	24.25	24.25	23.75	24	1,939,100
90	47	Security Bank Corp.	72	72	72	72	18,200
66	42.53	Union Bank of the Philippines	52	52	52	52	829,100
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
2.06	0.6	Bankard Inc.	2	2	1.92	1.98	7,146,000
16.25	1.9	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	9.9	10	9.5	10	172,400
8.8	4	Filipino Fund Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	2,000
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.8	0.82	0.8	0.82	1,000,000
42	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	900
1,730.00	1,555.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,700.00	1,700.00	1,700.00	1,700.00	210
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.15	3.15	3.05	3.1	4,357,000
3.1	1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.86	1.86	148,000
1,005.00	220	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	765	770	750	770	4,440
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	55,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.75	4.8	4.6	4.75	10,125,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	330,000
70	43	First Gen Corp.	61	62	61	62	578,900
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	75	77	75	77	1,364,000
15	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.25	3,779,000
116	16.25	Manila Electric Co. "A"	94	94.5	92	94	204,900
118	25	Manila Electric Co. "B"	94	94.5	92	94	774,100
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.2	6.4	6.2	6.4	36,787,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	5.2	5.3	5.1	5.3	3,965,000
14.75	6.7	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.4	7.4	90,000
1.9	0.92	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp	1.18	1.2	1.18	1.2	124,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.95	Alaska Milk Corp	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	206,000
2.95	1.86	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2	2	1.92	1.92	153,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24	24	24	2,500
61	32	Jollibee Foods Corp	51	51	50.5	50.5	1,426,700
1.96	0.78	RFM Corp.	1.4	1.48	1.4	1.48	66,000
4	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.2	2.22	2.2	2.2	69,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. "A"	62	62	61.5	61.5	83,500
88	60	San Miguel Corp. "B"	63.5	63.5	62.5	63.5	523,500
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	15.75	16	15.75	16	3,567,000
0.55	0.2	Vitarich Corp	0.39	0.39	0.36	0.36	60,000
		CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.59	EEI Corp.	4	4.3	3.9	4.3	5,685,000
9.2	4.7	Holcim Philippines Inc.	6.7	7.6	6.6	7.6	2,300,000
7	1.28	Republic Cement Corp	4.15	4.15	4	4	1,070,000
2	0.27	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.04	1.08	0.99	1.02	104,835,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.1	Chemrez Technologies Inc	4.2	4.3	4.15	4.2	1,202,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.1	Pryce Resources Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	13,960,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.8	A. Soriano Corp.	3	3.15	3	3.1	197,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.08	0.085	0.08	0.0825	59,600,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.54	0.55	11,190,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	3.1	3.2	3.05	3.2	1,608,000
3.7	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.5	291,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.3	6.5	6.3	6.5	2,131,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	21,700,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	4.4	4.6	4.35	4.6	23,141,000
1.38	0.49	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	50,000
1.5	0.15	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	1.94	1.98	1.9	1.96	1,547,000
590	356.25	Ayala Corp.	452.5	467.5	452.5	465	385,600
14.5	7.04	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	12	12.5	12	12.5	38,400
5.8	1.08	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.05	4.1	3.9	4	11,498,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8	8	7.9	8	698,000
6.9	1	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.6	3.85	3.6	3.7	23,000
2.5	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. "A"	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	20,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.5	105,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	1.84	1.84	1.76	1.76	880,000
14.5	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc	9.5	9.7	9.4	9.7	396,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.6	1.64	1.6	1.62	147,000
2.65	1.42	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. "B"	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	20,000
11.5	0.58	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.35	4.5	4.15	4.25	5,340,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.8	15,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	450,000
452.5	206.2	SM Investments Corp.	347.5	350	347.5	347.5	65,740
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.32	10,280,000
1.06	0.57	Solid Group Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	20,000
1.6	0.86	South China Resources Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	400,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	18.5	18.5	18	18.25	67,600
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.32	2,210,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.26	1.28	55,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc	6.9	6.9	6.7	6.9	91,000
19.25	11.04	Ayala Land Inc.	13.25	13.5	13	13.25	19,133,500
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.08	1,651,000
4.7	2.22	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.85	144,000
0.86	0.29	Crown Equities Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	370,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	500,000
0.99	0.47	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.69	0.67	0.69	31,710,000
0.47	0.048	Ever Gotesco Resources & Hold'gs Inc.	0.215	0.22	0.21	0.215	20,240,000
1.48	0.43	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.06	1.08	1.02	1.06	5,806,000
2.44	1.07	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.46	78,110,000
0.49	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	200,000
0.5	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	0.225	0.29	0.225	0.29	540,000
2.9	0.85	Keppel Philippines Properties Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	3,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.6	900,000
4.4	1.56	Megaworld Corp.	3.25	3.35	3.1	3.3	26,626,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.75	3.9	3.7	3.7	101,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.32	1,700,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty & Holdings Corp.	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.41	1,520,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.15	3.25	3.15	3.25	3,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	17.25	17.25	16.75	17	4,373,200
5.9	1.37	SM Development Corp.	3.6	3.75	3.55	3.75	332,000
13.5	6.16	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11	11.75	10.75	11.5	28,769,900
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.24	0.24	1,950,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc	4.95	5.1	4.9	5.1	13,127,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	29	31	29	31	150,400
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc	9.7	9.7	9.4	9.5	712,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.2	755,000
1,445.00	975	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,300.00	1,310.00	1,300.00	1,305.00	55,090
2,820.00	1,900.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,570.00	2,580.00	2,555.00	2,580.00	176,610
7.9	3.7	Pilipino Telephone Corp	6.6	6.8	6.4	6.8	2,677,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	5,580,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.5	725,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.03	0.031	0.029	0.029	106,900,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	15	15	14	14	23,500
2.9	1.6	Ionics Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	440,000
0.32	0.043	Island Information & Technology Inc.	0.175	0.18	0.17	0.175	60,820,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.24	1.28	1.24	1.28	45,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.048	0.049	0.048	0.049	76,900,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.42	2.5	692,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.6	1.78	1.6	1.76	421,000
6.8	3	Asian Terminals Inc.	4	4	4	4	619,000
34.5	14.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	1,083,600
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.7	239,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.6	Leisure and Resorts World Corp	3	3	2.9	2.9	163,000
6	2.16	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	20,000
0.98	0.3	Premiere Entertainment Prod Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.49	0.49	1,560,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	3,050,000
		EDUCATION					
9.8	7.2	Centro Escolar University	7.8	7.8	7.5	7.5	21,000
950	650	Far Eastern University Inc.	870	870	870	870	40
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.7	2.7	56,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp	4.2	4.2	4.15	4.2	145,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	10.75	11.5	10.75	11.5	126,800
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	12.75	13.25	12.5	13.25	1,258,200
		MINING					
0.018	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.01	76,000,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	4.4	4.4	4.1	4.1	41,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	4.4	4.4	4.1	4.1	82,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	12.5	12.5	12	12.5	3,412,300
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	9.7	9.8	9.7	9.8	6,000
3.1	0.33	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	1.4	1.44	1.32	1.36	127,982,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	2,560,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	69,600,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.023	56,000,000
30	1.2	NIHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	10	10.5	9.5	10	3,221,000
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	322,900,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.2	5.4	5.1	5.4	6,760,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.14	1,670,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	11,580,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.018	0.02	0.018	0.019	116,000,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	15,800,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp	0.019	0.02	0.018	0.019	456,200,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	
Financial	845.11 DOWN	17.68	26,683,570	581,343,605.00
Industrial	4,482.31 DOWN	72.37	193,331,100	917,639,335.00
Holding Firms	1,794.59 DOWN	13.41	154,546,740	427,605,755.00
Property	1,436.46 DOWN	40.31	237,955,600	963,406,690.00
Service	1,545.03 DOWN	7.70	265,414,340	642,707,190.00
Mining & Oil	5,262.97 DOWN	148.20	1,269,614,300	310,298,630.00
All Shares Index	2,045.29 DOWN	30.82		
PSEi	3,209.53 DOWN	42.24		
		GRAND TOTALS	2,147,545,650	3,843,001,205.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

BIR sets condition for compromise settlement of banks' DST liabilities

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE is requiring banks to pay 40 percent of their documentary stamp tax liabilities first before any request for compromise settlement will be entertained.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Gregorio Cabantac said the tax agency was not inclined to soften on its position, especially after winning cases in the Supreme Court against some banks.

"Some of the banks were offering to pay only 40 percent of their total DST liabilities as a compromise. But we did not agree. They should first pay 40 percent as a requirement for the BIR to entertain their request for a compromise," he said.

Cabantac said Revenue Commissioner Lilian Hefti had issued an order on this.

The DST liabilities of banks were accumulated since the 1990s, when banks started offering special savings deposit products.

Under the National Internal Revenue Code, time deposit accounts, which have higher interests, are subject to documentary stamp tax but ordinary savings accounts are not.

While the BIR said these special deposit accounts were subject to DST, the banking sector claimed they were not since they were savings accounts.

Not a single bank has remitted DST on these products since the 1990s.

Members of the Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) maintained that these were not subject to DST, which is imposed on financial instruments.

DST is equivalent to P1 per P200 worth of documented financial transaction.

Upon receiving tax assessment notices from the BIR, the each of the affected banks filed a case in court. Cabantac said some of the cases have already been decided upon by the Supreme Court, which ruled that special savings deposits accounts are subject to DST.

He said the recently enacted Tax Amnesty law was not expected to affect the BIR's efforts to run after the banking industry's DST liabilities, which the BIR said could have amounted to tens of billion pesos due to accumulated interests.

Cabantac said that while banks were not prohibited from applying for tax amnesty, doing so was not advisable for banks or any other regulated corporate entities.

Under the law, those who want to avail themselves of the tax amnesty are required to submit an amended statement of assets, liabilities and net worth, incorporating corrections from previously understated earnings.

Cabantac said that regulated entities that would amend their SALNs would expose themselves to questioning by their depositors or investors. "That will be a concern for people who invested in these entities," Cabantac told reporters at the sidelines of a forum on Tax Amnesty held yesterday in Makati.

The forum, organized by SGV & Co., was attended by accountants and financial practitioners.

PSALM to receive first payment for Masinloc next week

By Abigail L. Ho

FOLLOWING THE ISSUANCE OF THE FINAL transaction documents for the 600-megawatt Masinloc coal-fired power plant, Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. expects to get $11 million as first payment for the asset by next week.

PSALM last Tuesday issued to Masinloc Power Partners Co. Ltd. (MPPCL) the certificate of effectivity covering the sale of the plant and the final transaction documents.

PSALM and MPPCL are expected to complete their respective requirements within 60 days from the date of the closing of the transaction.

Within 10 days from the issuance of the certificate of effectivity, or by Sept. 7, MPPCL should remit to PSALM the performance bond for 2 percent of the $930-million bid price, minus land rentals.

The 2 percent of $930 million is about $18.6 million and with the rental fees of $7.03 million, PSALM expects to receive $11.6 million by next week.

The performance bond will ensure that MPPCL will not renege on its obligations provided under the asset purchase agreement with PSALM.

The upfront payment of 40 percent of the bid price, minus the rental fee and the option price of $703,000, is due 270 days after PSALM's delivery of all documentary requirements for the sale. This is equivalent to $376.6 million. The balance will be amortized over a seven-year period.

Globe expands bandwidth for Internet bundles

GLOBE TELECOM INC. HAS DOUBLED the available bandwidth for heavy Internet users and has introduced a residential wireless broadband package that runs on 3G.

For wired Internet-only connections, Globe doubled the 768 kbps plan to 1.5 Mbps without increasing the monthly fee of P995. The 1.5 Mbps plan also comes with free 60 minutes of Wi-Fi and one e-mail account with 100 MB of space.

There is also a 3 Mbps Internet-only plan for P1,995 a month. It comes with 120 Wi-Fi minutes and three e-mail accounts of 100 MB each.

For Internet-and-landline bundles, the lowest bandwidth is 384 kbps, with 30 Wi-Fi minutes and a 50 MB e-mail account for P995 a month. There is a 1 Mbps package with 60 Wi-Fi minutes and a 100 MB e-mail account for P1,295 a month. Globe also introduced for this segment a 2 Mbps package with 120 Wi-Fi minutes and three 100 MB e-mail accounts for P1,995.

For 3G plans, the maximum speed is 512 kbps. The Internet-only plan goes for P995 a month. Globe can also throw in a landline for consumers willing to fork out P1,295 a month.

"We are prepared to double or even quadruple our capacity to accommodate new users. We are also working with IT companies such as Intel and Microsoft for computer-bundled packages," Ramon Antonio L. Pineda, head of Globe's consumer broadband group, said in a press briefing.

Globe has signed up as the exclusive landing party for the trans-Pacific cable project spearheaded by VSNL International, a member of the Tata Group of India, which will link Asia directly to the US through an undersea cable system.

Globe earlier disclosed that it was spending P9 billion for the trans-Pacific cable system that will link Asia directly to the US. Rival telco Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. is investing in a separate undersea cable system and is also offering broadband plans. *Riza T. Olchondra*

Court asked to rule on North Harbor

By Riza T. Olchondra

HARBOUR CENTRE PORT TERMINALS Inc. is asking the court to compel the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) to proceed with and complete the bidding for the contract to operate Manila North Harbor which was started in July.

"We (Harbour Centre and Metro Pacific Investment Corp.) filed a writ of mandamus with the Manila RTC (Regional Trial Court) about two weeks ago, when the PPA said there will be a new round (of bidding)," Harbour Centre CEO Michael Romero said in an interview.

"The PPA had said before the bidding started and during the eligibility process that, under its charter, it can proceed with the auction even with just one bidder. That one bidder happened to be Harbour Centre, in joint venture with MPIC. We cannot understand why PPA changed the rules midway," Romero said.

Several companies expressed interest in the bidding for the contract—Harbour Centre, Asian Terminals Inc., Magsaysay Maritime Corp. , Pier 8 Arrastre and Stevedoring Services, and Prudential Customs Brokerage. However, only Harbour Centre was declared qualified to bid. ATI and Prudential were disqualified due to lack of eligibility requirements, MMC backed out and Pier 8 was a no-show. This prompted the PPA to declare the bidding a failure.

The PPA, instead of proceeding with the auction or entering into a negotiated sale with the remaining qualified bidder, decided to hold a new round of bidding but the schedule has yet to be set.

PPA General Manager Oscar Sevilla said in an interview that the regulator wanted to get the best possible offer for the contract so it preferred to have at least two bidders.

The agency is also preparing the guidelines for a negotiated bid should the follow-up attempt to bid out the contract fail.

"We already had two hearings so far (on the Manila RTC case). Let's just wait for the court to decide," Romero said.

IBM helps RP produce world-class engineers

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IBM CORP. TAKES PRIDE IN ITS ability to help clients earn more and gain that vital competitive edge by getting them to invest in the right kind of technology.

It does so by taking a closer look at what its clients need, in terms of systems and software, and recommending a whole suite of solutions that will get them from where they are to where they want to go.

The American company, which is celebrating its 70th year of business in the Philippines, wants to apply the same skills and expertise in helping the Philippines produce world-class engineers.

PARTNERS IN ENGINEERING PROGRESS. (From left) Science and Technology Secretary Estrella Alabastro, Stephen Braim, VP-Governmental Programs, IBM Asia Pacific, DOST Undersecretary Fortunato dela Peña and James Velasquez, IBM Philippines country general manager

New academic discipline

This is through its global program championing service science, management and engineering—a new academic discipline that brings together skills in the fields of computer science, industrial engineering, social and legal sciences and business strategy.

IBM Corp. president James Velasquez tells the INQUIRER that the firm is working on convincing the government and various academic institutions to modify the curriculum for engineering to include these skills, which are outside the traditional sphere of engineering.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

Velasquez says the engineering curriculum has to be expanded because both the local and global markets demand engineers who know more than just engineering.

Services, management

As it stands, the engineering curriculum is heavy on the engineering, math and science subjects, but little in the fields of economics, business management and more importantly, services.

IBM believes that services will define the economy of the future. Today, it already accounts for 75 percent of the US economy and still growing. The US Department of Labor estimated that by 2014, four of five jobs in the US will be in the services sector, including customer relationship management, retail and hospitality sectors, and information technology.

The Philippines is likely to follow the same trend and local graduates must be prepared to deal with the shift, including the engineers.

"The engineering curriculum is not yet aligned to what the market needs, so we are trying to get that interest going in modifying the curriculum to include a new set of disciplines," Velasquez says.

He says IBM was willing to bring in its experts from Europe and the United States to sit down with government and academic officials to see where the possible changes can be made.

Business, technology

"There should be a marriage between business and technology skills," Velasquez explains, "because engineers must know about the industry that they are working for."

IBM has already initiated talks with the Department of Science and Technology to introduce the new discipline.

It is also in discussions with the country's top academic institutions, including the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, Far Eastern University, University of the East, University of San Carlos in Cebu and the Asia Pacific College to see where they can collaborate in crafting a new curriculum.

Velasquez says that by providing engineering students with a more well-rounded skill and knowledge set, they will be better prepared to do a good job when they join the labor force.

"This will also help us as a country to compete with the others, because our engineers will be equipped with not just the hard technical skills but soft skills, such as in services," he says.

Well-rounded engineers

IBM says that graduates of service science, management and engineering can enter the workforce as solution designers, consultants, engineers, scientists and managers.

"After gaining practical experience across multiple industry sectors and with rapidly evolving technology tools and solutions that transform. businesses and institutions, they will then go on to be successful entrepreneurs, executives, researches and practitioners, with a solid ground in theory and practice to design complex solutions," IBM says in a statement.

SSME professionals, IBM adds, will be experts in developing solutions in coordination with teams across disciplines.

It is IBM's hope that through the SSME program, the Philippines will have a formidable pool of such experts.

GOINGS-ON

Bancommerce bags awards

SMALL BUSINESS GUARANTEE and Finance Corp. recently honored Bancommerce with two awards: the 2007 Distinguished Partnership for the Credit Guarantee Program and the 2007 Distinguished Partnership for the SME Wholesale Lending Program.

Bancommerce EVP Arturo E. Manuel received the awards for the bank. The bank excellence awards is an annual event held to recognize top performing banks with a well-managed SME lending account.

ArtPetron winners

THE WINNERS OF THE 2007 ArtPetron, the nationwide student art competition of Petron Corp., were honored in awarding ceremonies held at the Cultural Hall of Petron MegaPlaza on Aug. 28, 2007.

With the theme "Alay sa Palatandaang Bayan," this year's ArtPetron drew a record 1,265 entries from art students nationwide. The winners in the oil painting category are: Dave Alcon of the Technological University of the Philippines-Manila; Emerson Guiam of Tarlac State University, and Raffy Napay of Eulogio Amang Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology.

In watercolor painting, the winners are: Ronald Jeresano from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines-Sta. Mesa; Gerald Mungcal from Chasse Arteskwela (Tarlac City), and Julmard Vicente from the University of the East-Caloocan.

In photography, the winners are: Jo-Ann Bolis, Ramon Magsaysay Evening Vocational School; Dave Buenconsejo, University of San Carlos (Cebu City); Marilaine Claudette Gapal, San Sebastian College-Recoletos; Jemerson Magay, Asia Pacific College, James Brian Ona, PUP-Sta. Mesa, and Dave Arjay Tan, UE-Caloocan.

Tax amnesty law seminar

ISLA LIPANA & CO./PricewaterhouseCoopers will conduct a seminar, dubbed "Tax Amnesty Law: Knowing there is a Choice and Making the Right One," on Aug. 31, 2007, 12 noon to 6 p.m. at Ballroom B, Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati City.

Speakers are Revenue Deputy Commissioner for operations Nelson Aspe, Isla Lipana & Co. managing tax partner Alex Cabrera and tax partner Malou Lim. For registration contact Analou (459-2050), Heidi (459-2056), Baby (459-2048), Marlene (459-2049) or Menchu (459-2046).

Peso slips further to 46.83 to a dollar

From page B1

sentiment on emerging markets.

The peso and the South Korean won suffered the worst losses against the greenback in Asian regional markets yesterday.

"There was some profit-taking toward the end of the session. However, bias is still on the upside," said Banco de Oro EPCIBank chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas.

He said the the market would likely test the 47:$1 barrier today.

"The credit turmoil is likely to interact with a worsening US housing slump and weaken the economy. Central banks have been hoping for a long time that credit spreads would widen but the abruptness of the widening is the problem," said the London-based global economic unit of American Express Bank.

"Increased uncertainty over the economic outlook and the higher cost of credit will hit consumer and business confidence, and could slow household spending and corporate investment at a time when news from the housing market is likely to worsen further," Amex said.

In the Philippines, the peso's weakening yesterday reflected the fall in the stock market caused by renewed jitters over emerging markets.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. senior vice president Marcelo Ayes said the peso-dollar market was on a consolidation mode and would likely test the 47:$1 barrier soon.

"There's also an emerging political risk," Ayes said, citing the Sept. 15 expected release of the decision on the plunder case against ousted President Joseph Estrada.

"The flows which came into the stock market are not new money but those from investors waiting on the sidelines," he said.

But financial markets are looking forward to some relief from a possible cut by the US Federal Reserve of its key policy rate by September.

"Economic trends outside the US should remain supportive, valuations have naturally improved, and a Fed rate cut will bolster confidence," Amex said.

The next few months, analysts said, could bring more bad news from the credit markets—not just from housing but from manufacturing and the consumer sector as well.

JCI Senate, Insular Life accept Tofil nominations until Aug. 31

JCI SENATE PHILIPPINES AND THE Insular Life Assurance Company, Ltd are still accepting nominations for the 2007 The Outstanding Filipino (Tofil) Award until Aug. 31. JCI Senate Philippines national president Senen Quimbao and Insular Life chair and CEO Vicente R. Ayllón call on the public to nominate Filipinos who can serve as role models to the youth to strive for excellence in their chosen field of expertise and to contribute to the building of a progressive Philippine society.

Both JCI Senate and Insular Life see the need to inspire our young people to aim for excellence in whatever field they venture but at the same time doing so with a sense of love of country and helping improve the world they are in. That is why the JCI Senate and Insular Life continue to partner in this worthwhile endeavor, for 20 years now.

Now on its 20th year, the Tofil Award aims to give recognition to Filipinos, 41 years and older, who have made significant contributions to the advancement of their profession, public welfare and national development.

Members of the 2007 Tofil Committee headed by this year's chair JCI senator Mannix Bautista and search committee chair Vic Cruz have been unrelenting in their effort to search for less known but equally deserving individuals to be nominated to Tofil. They have visited various provincial cities to talk about Tofil and the need to bring to public attention individuals who have made significant contributions in their own fields especially those who do so without much fun-fare.

Since its inception in 1988, Tofil has awarded a total of 90 outstanding Filipinos. The Tofil Awardees for 2006 were: Marciano G. Evangelista for Service to Non-Government Organizations, Antonio Meloto, Jr. for Humanitarian Service, Ramon G. Orlina for the Arts Orlina, and Socorro C. Ramos for Business.

Any individual or organization may nominate a candidate on the official Tofil nomination form. These forms are available at all JCI Senate chapter offices and Insular Life offices nationwide, or call the JCI Senate Secretariat office at 374-4390 and 412-5662 or the Insular Life Head Office at 771-1818. Nomination forms may also be downloaded from www.tofil.ph. Nominations should cover accomplishments up to June 30, 2007. Deadline for submission of nominations is Aug. 31, 2007.

CBLIC PARTNERS WITH NINANG NG OFW

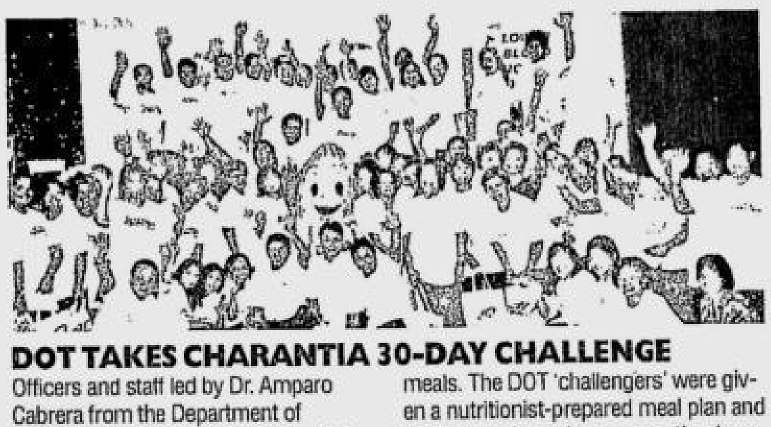
Country Bankers Life Insurance Corp (CBLIC) recently signed a partnership and sponsorship agreement with Ninang ng OFW Foundation Inc, represented by (seated) CBLIC president, lawyer Romeo G. Velasquez and Ninang chair Vivian D. Drilon. CBLIC was chosen by Ninang ng OFW as the life insurance provider of member OFWs under the 'Bagong Bayaning Pinoy Movement' to be launched by the foundation in August 2007. Various projects will be implemented by the foundation to provide quality assistance to a targeted membership base of at least one million OFWs. Witnessing the contract signing are (from left): Maria Teresa F. Padua, vice president for marketing; Julius Desiderio Villareal, SVP and director; and Geraldine Desiderio Garcia, SVP and general manager. CBLIC has a sterling track record in the life insurance business for the past 42 years while Ninang ng OFW Foundation Inc aims to provide Tesda approved scholarship training, job placement, legal assistance and livelihood opportunities to OFW members. For more information on Country Bankers Life Insurance Corp and its various products, visit 648 T.M. Kalaw Avenue, Ermita, Manila or call 523-8611 to 18; fax 536-1056 or log on to www.countrybankers.net.

1ST PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL MOTOR SHOW

The 1st Philippine International Motor Show formally opened at the World Trade Center Metro Manila in Pasay City Aug. 9. The event, which carries the theme, 'Shifting to Higher Gear,' unveiled the latest and the best from the top automakers in the country. Organized by the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Campi) it also showcased the strength and unity of the Philippine automotive industry, as it supported the future trends, developments and requirements of modern-day car consumers. A total of 18 new car models were introduced to the general motoring public including the exhibition of 6 state-of-the-art concept cars. Photo shows at the Volvo Pavilion, Senate president Manuel Villar trying out the new Volvo C70 Convertible. To his left is Campi president Elizabeth Lee.

LIM GRADUATES MAGNA CUM LAUDE FROM YALE

Former Youngblood contributor Therese Anne Lim, 21, recently graduated magna cum laude from Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She double-majored in Economics and Political Science and earned distinction in Political Science. Therese's cumulative GPA was 3.87, with 4.0 being the highest grade a student can receive. Therese was also named a Yale Journalism Scholar, in recognition of her contributions to and potential in the field of journalism. She wrote for the Yale Herald, a newsweekly, and co-edited Development Magazine and contributed to a variety of other publications. In August, Therese will be starting her new job as an Associate in the Global Communications and Public Affairs division of Google Inc in Mountain View, California.



DOT TAKES CHARANTIA 30-DAY CHALLENGE

Officers and staff led by Dr. Amparo Cabrera from the Department of Tourism main office in Manila last July took the Charantia 30-Day Challenge, where they were dared to shift to a healthy lifestyle by sticking to proper diet, adopting a regular exercise program and regularly drinking of Charantia after meals. The DOT 'challengers' were given a nutritionist-prepared meal plan and exercise regimen for one month, plus a supply of Charantia Ampalaya Tea. Through weekly blood sugar testing, those who stuck to the healthy lifestyle regimen admitted to experiencing lower blood sugar level or less spiking.

3Com appoints MSI-ECS as authorized Philippine distributor

3COM ASIA ANNOUNCED THE appointment of MSI-ECS as Authorized Distributor in the Philippines following the integration of H3C in Asia Pacific.

The award-winning distributor of technology products in the Philippines was previously appointed as the distributor for H3C in 2006. Today, with the integration of both 3Com & H3C, MSI-ECS has extended its portfolio to include both companies' suite of product offerings.

The Manila-headquartered set up will leverage its extensive base of channel partners across the enterprise, SMB, and retail space in the Philippines as well as its experience in technology distribution in the region to support 3Com's strategy in the market.

"The appointment of MSI-ECS enables us to provide better support for our extended product portfolio that came as a result of integrating 3Com and H3C, as well as market coverage via their extensive channel partner network," said Peter Chai, 3Com's vice president and general manager (Asia Pacific). "A strong local-based partner such as MSI-ECS which has a solid track record in the market, is a key to our commitment to growing 3Com in the Philippines."

"The combination of both 3Com and H3C product lines gives us an extensive and well positioned portfolio of networking equipment," said Jimmy Go, president and CEO, MSI-ECS (Philippines) Inc. "This appointment reinforces our commitment to our resellers by giving them market-leading solutions to sell and enriching their business with new opportunities."

3Com Corporation is a leading provider of secure, converged voice and data networking solutions for enterprises of all sizes. 3Com offers a broad line of innovative products backed by world-class sales, service and support, which excel at delivering business value for its customers.

MSI-ECS (Philippines) Inc., formerly MSI-Digiland (Philippines), Inc., is a leading distributor of Information Technology products and solutions in the Philippines. Its impressive breadth of offerings include notebooks, desktops, servers, peripherals, software, storage, among others. The company represents such respected brands as Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Apple, Lenovo, EMC and Oracle, among others.

Bits Clips

Plaza Crest Open House

PLAZA CREST LUXURY RESIDENCES -- A LOW-rise, low-density community consisting of two- and three-storey townhouses, three-storey garden villas and condominium buildings -- will conduct an Open House activity on Saturday, Sept. 1. Construction at the enclave located in the heart of Parañaque City is now in full swing. The luxury homes, set amid a lush garden environment, will feature underground utilities and wide paver roads, pocket gardens and jogging paths, resort-type clubhouse with vast swimming pool, badminton and basketball courts, three-meter high perimeter fence, and 24-hour security camera at the entrance gate. Prices start from P1.67 million. Pay as low as 30 percent only in 60 months on the balance of the purchase price through their Super-Flexx Payment Plan. To visit the site, right turn at Sucat Road from Sucat Exit, left turn at San Pedro Street going to San Antonio Valley 2. Plaza Crest is a luxury development of DO Plaza Estates Inc and designed by Palafox Associates and RMDA Architects. For details call Plaza Crest at 523-8196 to 98 or 820-7969.

6cyclemind's 3rd hit from Home - 'Dinamayan'

AFTER THE SUCCESS OF THEIR 2 SMASH HITS PRINSESA AND UPSIDE Down from their Home album, 6cyclemind strikes for the third time with their latest single "Dinamayan" from the same album. "Dinamayan" is a song that speaks about always being there for someone with its line which goes "nakinig ka ng awit ko ng walang pagkasawa...". This exactly is how 6cyclemind wishes their songs to touch their listener's lives as demonstrated by their anthem-ic hits Sandalan, I, Sige, Trip and Biglaan among others. Dinamayan will be the last single that will be released from the Home album as the boys prepare to return with their all-original songs for their forth album this October. Home is a collection of favorite songs from the band's influences such as Beatles, The Cure, Teeth, and many more. Home album is still available at your local record bars nationwide.

Buy I Take I Tempura at Tempura Japanese Grill

TEMPURA JAPANESE GRILL, HOME OF THE BEST EBI TEMPURA IN town, is serving Buy 1 Take 1 tempura until the end of August as part of its 6th anniversary promotions. Tempura Japanese Grill prides itself in serving the most succulent tiger prawns deep-fried to a perfect crisp. Fortified with Omega 3, a fatty acid proven to have health benefits, the shrimp tempura is guaranteed to please the palate and promote good health. Tempura Japanese Grill has branches in SM Southmall, Mall of Asia, Alabang Town Center, Makati Avenue, Convergy's Makati, Tomas Morato, Quezon City, Retiro, Quezon City, UN Avenue Manila, and Greenhills, San Juan.

ADU organizes Grand Academic Conference

ADAMSON UNIVERSITY , IN CELEBRATION OF ITS 75TH FOUNDATION Anniversary, presents the inaugural Grand Academic Conference on Aug. 30-31, at the Waterfront Manila Pavilion Hotel along UN Ave. The theme is "Harnessing Advances in Science and Technology for Poverty Reduction." The conference gathers various learning disciplines to bring to the fore scientific and technological breakthroughs, as well as advances in human understanding, that can possibly help reduce poverty in the country. It also aims to critically analyze economic, social, religious, ethical, and cultural dimensions of current advances in science and technology, and how these affect the Filipino individual, family, and community.

DSAP holds 11th National Convention in Cebu

MEMBERS OF THE DRUG STORES ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (DSAP) will once again gather for their 11th Annual National Convention slated on Sept. 5 to 7, at the Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center in Lahug, Cebu City. This year's theme-A Decade of Challenges: Looking Forward, Surging High-aptly sums up DSAP's movement during the last 11 years. Among the highlights of the seminar are the introduction of the Candidates for 2008 National Directors on Sept. 5, and the DSAP Awards Night on Sept. 6 wherein DSAP will present highly selected members with awards of Lifetime Achievement, Chapter Achievements, Presidential Merit, and Generic Education.

'Color Folders...' showcased in bookfair

COLOR FOLDERS IN THE MIND: A BRANDING STORY BY 2001 NATIONAL Agora Awardee for Marketing Education, Dr. Karen V. De Asis is a quick and light soft-bound trade book for marketers and non-marketers or just about anybody interested in understanding people and consumers. The book provides the reader a peek into different types of consumers with insights dredged by research. Color Folders in the Mind: A Branding Story is among the bestsellers to be showcased at the Felta Multi-Media booth during the Manila International Bookfair to be held on Aug. 29 to Sept. 2 at the World Trade Center, Metro Manila, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Roxas Blvd.

Ace Insurance Philippines 60th anniversary

ACE INSURANCE'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN THE Philippines was marked by a huge amount of optimism in its business potential in the Asia Pacific region, as articulated no less than by ACE Asia Pacifics' chief operating officer Damien Sullivan. In his speech at the recent anniversary cocktails held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati, Sullivan said that "If there's one word to sum up ACE's current sentiment in Asia Pacific, it's excitement. We're extremely excited by the fact that this region has been designated as a key strategic growth region for the ACE Group." ACE's eagerness to expand further in the region is taking shape as they've recently opened business in Vietnam and Macau. ACE's products include Personal accident (Accidental death, disability and medical); Health insurance (Accident and sickness insurance including hospital income, critical illness, cancer and disability); Travel insurance (Business and personal); Employee benefits (Voluntary Accidental Death & Disability, travel, occupational accident, stop-loss medical and dental and vision programs); as well as Creditor insurance (Credit life, disability and unemployment).

Product Files

Meet your sole-mate

THE LONG WAIT IS OVER. MEET YOUR SOLE-mate - Titania Smooth Heel Cream. Rejuvenate dry, cracked heels with its gentle yet potent formula consisting of a base of skin-conditioning fats with lanolin and a combination of beneficial active ingredients: pro-vitamin B5, bisabolol, chamomile, horse-chestnut extract, menthol and camphor. Titania Smooth Heel Cream conditions the skin on your feet, keeps it elastic and helps lock in moisture to prevent cracking. Reward yourself after a long day's work and free your feet from those painful, unsightly cracks. Titania products are exclusively distributed by Filstar Distributors Corp, 2nd Floor Reliance Center Building, 99 E. Rodriguez Avenue, Ugong, Pasig; tel. no. 671-0555.

Latest addition to the Welch's family

WELCH'S JUICES ARE PACKED WITH NATURal antioxidants which help protect our good cells from being damaged by "free radicals". The importance of eating foods rich in anti-oxidants help us maintain long-term health. Welch's presents the latest addition to the Welch's Family - the Welchade Fruit Juice line, available in Grape, Strawberry Kiwi and Strawberry Watermelon. These flavors are irresistibly refreshing and tastes delicious. It is a very healthy beverage suitable for all ages. The packaging comes is a very trendy bottle with very colorful prints and visuals of the fruits presented. The size is not too much and not too little for a single serve drink. Grab all these flavors at your favorite supermarket. These are distributed by Global Strategic Partners Distribution Inc (formerly Teope Commercial) and by Fly Ace Corp with the supervision of Gemco as Philippine Merchandising Agent of Welch's International. For more information on Welch's, you may visit the website at www.welchs.com

Lizzie McGuire, Danny Phantom join JKM

JOLLIBEE BRINGS THE CUTE and courageous characters of today's popular teen TV shows to young fans nationwide. Inspired by Disney Channel's Lizzie McGuire and Nickelodeon's Danny Phantom, the latest Jollibee Kids Meal (JKM) toys are six cool collectibles that come with langhap-sarap treats and provide hours of fun with friends. Girls can take their cue from the sheepish yet always sincere Lizzie McGuire with JKM's Little Miss Gadgets. Boys can play at being a teenage ghost hunter like Danny Phantom with the JKM Fright Fighters. Bring home the adventures (and misadventures) of Lizzie McGuire and Danny Phantom for only P66 to P92 per Jollibee Kids Meal. Promo ends on Sept. 8.

Bring back the zest and vitality in your life

HDI NETWORK PHILIPPINES INC'S LIQUID Royale Jelly can bring back the zest and vitality in your life. It rejuvenates and revitalizes the mind and body, slowing down the aging process, restores vitality and sexual potency, reduces stress, helps people suffering from menopause, hormonal imbalances and high cholesterol, among others. For inquiries call 435-9999 or visit HDI Network at the 3rd Floor, Suite 302 Jollibee Plaza, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Website: www.hdinetwork.com.ph.

New Le Froge collection

LE FROGE, PHILIPPINE FASHION AWARDS 2006 awardee for Boy's Teens Apparel, comes out with a new collection of casual tops for school, work and leisure with a fusion of comfort and function. The brand makes use of light and cool fabric for convenience and interesting print designs that vary from one item to another that makes Le Froge fashion edgy. Round neck and collared shirts are ideal for high school and college students during civilian days or after school while young professionals have polo shirts and long sleeved shirts to make a Friday or weekend fashion statement. All shirts may be worn in combination with the different styles of Le Froge jackets that are perfect for the rainy season. Le Froge items are available in SM Department Stores nationwide.

In loving memories and in prayers, we remember the friend, the brother, the mentor and the father on the 5th anniversary of his passing.

Jose "Peping" Alvarez Roño

of Calbayog City, Samar
March 19, 1923 - August 30, 2002

Who humbly served as:
***Deputy Prime Minister** of the Republic of the Philippines*
***Minister**, Dept. of Local Government and Community Development*
***Governor**, Province of Samar*
***Congressman**, 1st District, Samar*
***Mayor**, Calbayog City*

*A memorial mass will be held on **August 30, 2007** at **4:30 p.m.** at the **Libingan ng mga Bayani,** Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.*

Holy masses will be offered at the following churches today, August 30, 2007 :

***St. Claire Monastery**......................6:00 a.m.*
Bgy. Rawis, Calbayog City, Samar

***Consolatrix Monastery**..................6:30 a.m.*
Bgy. San Policarpio, Calbayog City, Samar

***St. Peter & Paul Cathedral**...........5:30 a.m.*
Calbayog City, Samar & 5:00 p.m.

***St. Bartholomew Parish**.......................5:30 a.m.*
Catbalogan City, Samar & 5:30 p.m.

***Most Holy Trinity Parish**..................6:00 a.m.*
Bgy. Trinidad, Catbalogan City, Samar

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
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❶ Copy of Death Certificate
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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

DANILO S. DE JESUS, SR.

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on August 28, 2007.

He is survived by his wife **Amparo**; children **Arthur, Anthony & Sheila, Danilo & Leila**; grandchildren **Shan Daniele, Shawn Andrei, Joshua & Lara Janine**; sister and brothers **Corazon, Conrado, Jose, Willie, Florencio (deceased)** and **Armando (deceased)** as well as nephews and nieces, They and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will lie in state at Sanctuarium (Chapel Orchid), G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City until Sunday, September 02, 2007. The time of the Mass will be announced later.

Interment will be on September 02, 2007, 1:00 p.m. at Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

Message of Thanks

The family of the late

EMILIANA TOMAS DELA MERCED

"Ka Miling"

would like to express their heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all those who condoled with them at their time of loss.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Twenty Third Death Anniversary of

CLEMENTE S. GATMAITAN, SR.

M.D., M.P.H.

who died in the Grace of our Lord on August 30, 1984 at the age of 78.

His bereaved children, **Natividad and Deogracias, Clemente**, Jr. and Concepcion, Escolastico and Erna; grandchildren, great-grandchildren and other relatives request the pious readers to offer prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Holy Masses will be offered today, August 30, 2007 at:
7:00 A.M., Sacred Heart Parish Church, Scout Ybardolaza, Kamuning, Q.C.
6:00 P.M., Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City

---

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"From darkness let the light shine!" Genesis 1:3

Dell plans to send Pinoys to call centers abroad

Philippine unit best in customer satisfaction, says company

By Ronnel W. Domingo

DELL INC. PLANS TO SEND highly trained Filipino employees abroad to help start up call centers in its global network.

This is part of the Dell philosophy of deploying experts where they are needed.

"When we started here in the Philippines, we brought in people from the United States, Panama and elsewhere," said Michael J. Garrison, country manager of Dell International Services Philippines Inc.

"Now, it is the Philippines' turn to send some of its best people to help out with new sites," Garrison said.

Asked whether there were such plans, Garrison said there was none so far but that Filipinos were lined up for deployment.

He said this was partly a result of the prestige that Dell's Philippine call centers have earned.

Its Pasay call center was cited as best in customer satisfaction, under Dell's worldwide internal recognition system.

Dell has 25 call centers spread across the globe, employing some 78,700 team members.

"As for local expansion, we would see how things would be when we reach 2,500 employees," Garrison said. "We will assess how we are doing and decide on what to do then."

"(But) we are really excited about the quality of work that we turn out here and our ability to scale up our services," he said. "That says a lot about our team members."

He also said that the firm was going for more high-value services as it expects to reach its target workforce size of 2,500 people ahead of schedule.

Dell operates two sites that cater exclusively to users of Dell products, one at the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City and another in Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City.

"We already have 1,500 people in Pasay and 700 in Eastwood," Garrison said. "The plan was to grow to 2,500 people by end-2007, but we may do that sooner."

He said the company's direction was to add new service offerings and go up the technical ladder rather than grow in number.

"This does not necessarily translate into an expansion of workforce but more of retraining existing employees (for more complex jobs)," Garrison explained.

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Generali collected P1.3B in premiums in H1

By Michelle V. Remo

INSURANCE FIRM GENERALI PILIPINAS has collected P1.3 billion worth of premiums in the first half, putting it on track to meeting its goal of increasing sales this year by 35 percent.

Joe Ferreria, Generali chief marketing officer, said in a briefing yesterday that the company plans to generate P2.7 billion in premium income this year, up from last year's P2 billion, and that the goal looked "attainable."

Ferreria added that Generali was financially healthy enough to meet the government's solvency and capitalization requirements this year, and stressed that it was earlier reported as under-capitalized only because of "timing."

Generali's life and non-life insurance arms were both included in the list of companies that fell short of the government's capitalization requirements, based on the Insurance Commission's list of undercapitalized firms as of June this year.

But Generali explained that it was only included in the list because documents regarding its capital infusion were still being confirmed by the regulator.

Last month, the Insurance Commission issued a statement declaring that Generali was already sufficiently capitalized after recognizing the capital infusion.

"As what the Insurance Commission had already stated before, we don't have a funding problem. What happened before was just really an issue of timing," Ferreria said yesterday on the sidelines of its "Be Safe and Sound" home-safety campaign.

Generali is owned by Italian insurer Assisurazioni Generali with Jerneh Berhad Asia and Banco de Oro Universal Bank, which has a bancassurance agreement with Generali.

Meanwhile, Generali has teamed up with the the Philippine National Red Cross and the Makati City government to get households to learn the value of securing their property with non-life insurance.

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APL Philippines

The Philippines is a key South East Asian market for global ocean carrier APL. The company has had presence here since 1917, and today has nine branch offices and extensive operations throughout the country.

APL is a global top-10 container transportation provider and its sister company, APL Logistics, is a leading provider of international, integrated supply chain services.

Both companies are part of the Singapore-listed global transportation and logistics group Neptune Orient Lines (NOL), whose 2006 revenues were in excess of US$7 billion.

APL's services to the Philippines are complemented by more than 60 weekly services and nearly 300 calls at more than 90 ports in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. It combines world-class intermodal operations with leading-edge IT and e-commerce.

APL has interests in nine ports in Asia and the Americas and controls a fleet of more than 100 container vessels, which carried 2.1 million forty-foot equivalent units (FEU) in 2006.

As in other markets, APL is very much part of the Philippine community. APL supports several charitable initiatives which support the education of less privileged children - including providing special reduced freight for the "Books for Barrios" initiative, and donating decommissioned cargo containers to be converted to classrooms for the students at Philippine Christian Foundation schools.

After over 90 years, APL is committed to moving business forward in the Philippines long into the future.

LIFESTYLE
Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart)
WEDNESDAY 2BU THURSDAY FOOD

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SOFIA!

HAPPY 7th BIRTHDAY PRINCESS NATALIA

MARTA Matute's beautiful cakes

Looking for more than just a pretty 'face'

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

COULD YOU RECOMMEND A bakeshop or someone who bakes theme cakes? This will be given as a gift. I heard Marta does delicious and pretty theme cakes. If you have her e-mail address or website, I will really appreciate it if you can send it to me as well as your other recommendations.

DITAS LOPEZ-ADAD

I have different decorators depending on what I want and my budget. Personally, the best for me are: for fondant cakes, there is the one and only Penk Ching (tel. 0917-8122676); for my themed sugar iced cakes, of course, there is Marta Matute (0917-5207265). There are also Melissa Lim (0917-8928000), Sasa Tan (0917-5339275) and Art Cakes.

Indeed, you are right. Marta makes them very, very well both in looks and in taste!

Recently, she opened a cake shop at Fun Ranch and Serendra to showcase her works of art. At her Serendra branch, you can even have a party. She will organize it for you complete with baking/decorating activities for the kids.

'Ube' lover

Been trying to make *ube* jam but remain unhappy. I love *ube* and everything that has *ube*. Any *ube* finds and jam recipe?

MARITA

I, too, Marita, love everything with *ube*. My latest discovery is Iya Lagdameo's *ube pastillas*.

I thought her regular jumbo *pastillas* were perfect for my sugar craving. One piece and I get my fix, or so I thought, till I tasted her *ube* variant!

It is *jaleyang pastillas* complete with the bits! Everything about it is well done and perfectly executed—from the packaging to the manner in which the *pastillas* are so evenly shaped into oversized logs and individually wrapped! Truly every bite is well worth the price! It is by far the best in its category!

The business that came to be thanks to her mom's (Marilu Guingona) prodding. Wondering why all the *pastillas* for sale were so tiny while those made by their midwife were so huge, they thought, "Why not make it a business?" And sweet business it came to be, indeed!

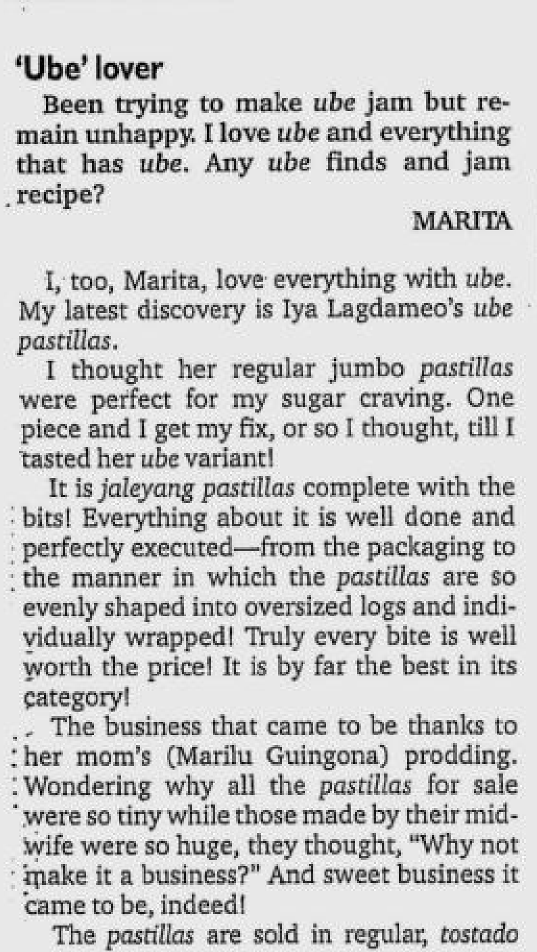
The *pastillas* are sold in regular, *tostado* and *ube* (tel. 7290325 and 0928-3477182)!

Here is your *ube* jam recipe! Enjoy! I love how gooey and gummy this is!

Ube Jam

3 c fresh *ube*, grated (pick the nice, deep-purple ones)
1½ c water
½ c butter

LOOKING/ C4



HAWAIIAN-THEMED cake and cupcakes

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Flavored Rice & Meat Toppings: Sept. 8 (Sat) 9 a.m -1 p.m. Garlic Rice, Pineapple Rice, Adobo Rice, Saffron Rice, Tapa Tips, Tocino, Native Longganisa and Crispy Corned Beef. P 1,000.
Chinese Cooking: Sept. 15 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p. m. Pata Tim, Chinese Lumpia, Siomai, Kikiam, Pork Spareribs w/ black beans, Chinese stuffed chicken, Almond Jelly. P 1,000.
Meringue Desserts: Sept. 15 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Sansrival, Sylvannas, Brazo de Mercedez, Lemon Meringue Pie. Bonus: Chocolate Custard. P 1,000.
Kakanin: Sept. 22 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Cassava Cake, Pichi Pichi, Cuchinta, Maja Nangka, Putong Puti, Bibingkang Malagkit, Homemade Salabat. Bonus: Commercial Bibingka. P 1,000.
Chinese Snack Meals: Sept. 22 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Siopao, Cuapao, Hopia, Buchi, Pork & Vegetable Dumplings and Curry tarts. P 1,000.
Coffee 101 (Barista Class): Sept. 22 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Coverage: Coffee History, Coffee Process, Trouble shooting, Machine know-how, proper grinding. Techniques to perfect froth. Actual preparation of popular Traditional Hot Coffee Concoction: Espresso, Cappuccino, Latte, etc.; Cold Coffee Concoctions and Spins. P1,500.
Edible Food Gifts: Sept. 29 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Mini Fruit Cake w/ Fondant Icing, Cinnamon Bread, Stolen, Chutney, Paté, Pasta Sauces: Putanesca, Pesto & Aglio Olio (w/ Packaging Presentation). P 1,000.
Bartending: Sept. 29 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Basic tools, Classifications of Wine & Spirits, Types of Bar Glasses & Usage. Mixing Serving of Popular Cocktail Drinks including Snacks. P 1,500.

CERTIFICATE COURSES FOR ADULTS (Limited enrollment, pre-registration required)

Basic Culinary: Sept. 4-7/18-21 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Proper hygiene, sanitation & safety; nutrition & nutritional cooking; proper mis-en-place of mirepoix, stocks, soups, sauces, marinades, use of herbs & spices combinations, proper purchasing, storage, techniques of disjointing & boning poultry, filleting fish & meat fabrication. With actual preparation of dishes from appetizer, salad, eggs, pasta, seafoods, poultry & meats, dessert including garnishing for plate presentation. Free cookbook. P6,000.
Fundamentals of Bakery Production: Sept. 11-14/25-28 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Basic & commercial baking techniques applicable to the use of various ready mixes, yeast breads, quick breads, pies, cookies & cakes includes theory practice for Commercial Scale Productions with Free Baking Cookbook. P5,000
Basic Cake Design: Sept. 27 & 28 (Th-F) 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. Fundamentals of cake decorating; coloring, icing (Boiled, Caramel, Chocolate, Sugar, Simple Fondant Icing); Basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flowers including bunching techniques. Individual workshop on icing application & cake designing. Free cake decorating tips. P4,000.

For inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays thru Saturdays) at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph

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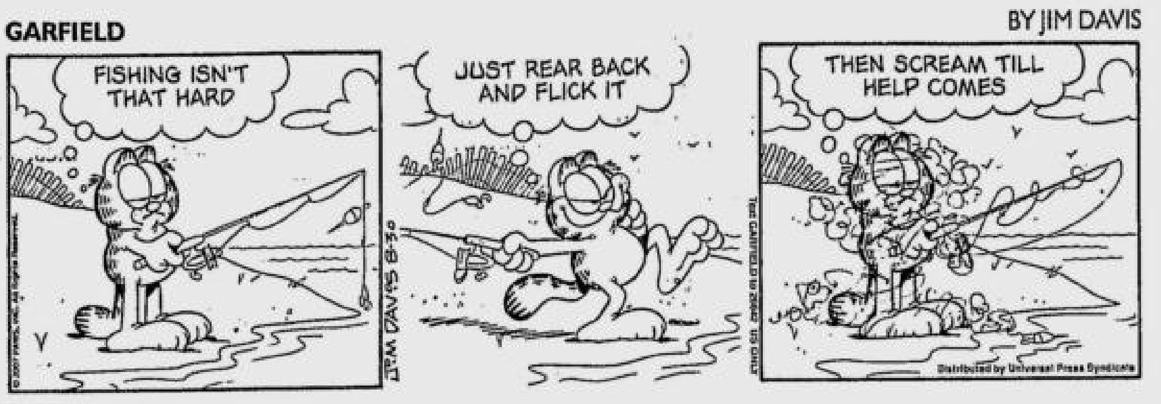
H.V.DELA COSTA Emily 8140138/8140151 0928 2107247
LEGASPI VILL. Toni 8938935 0928 9719938
MEGAMALL Ruby 6313869/6377543 0916 2479753
PASAY ROAD Moon 8871335/8873530 0915 6893088
PASIG Abbie 6815333/6473816 0928 4763108
SM NORTH Michelle 9295429/9264215 0905 2690717
SUBIC Beth 2526514 0928 6712299

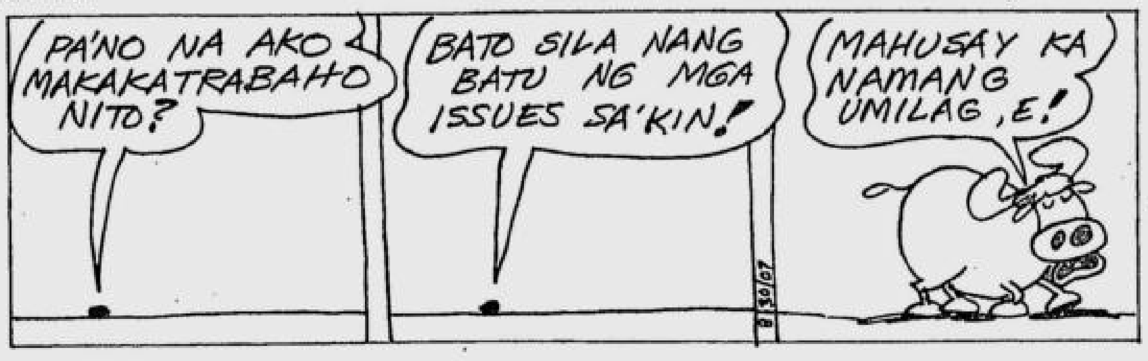
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


FISHING ISN'T THAT HARD
JUST REAR BACK AND FLICK IT
THEN SCREAM TILL HELP COMES
JIM DAVIS 8-30
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

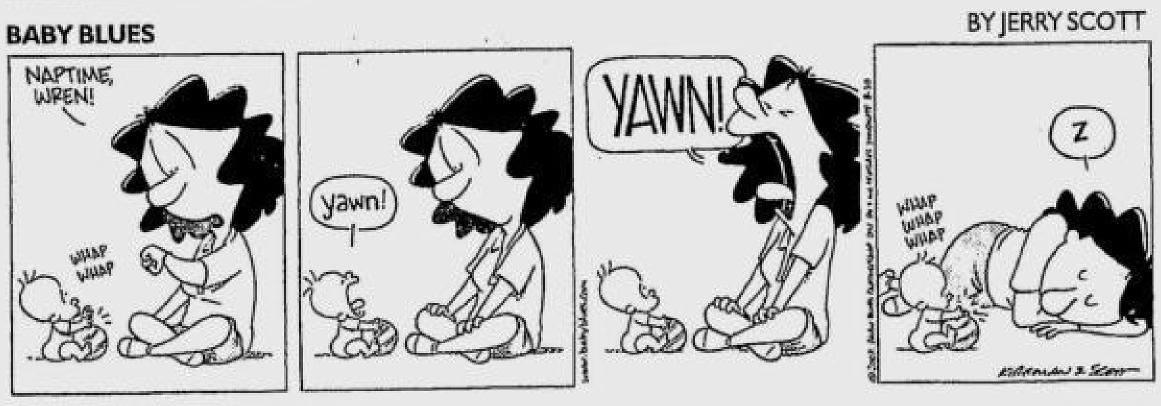
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PA'NO NA AKO MAKAKATRABAHO NITO?
BATO SILA NANG BATO NG MGA ISSUES SA'KIN!
MAHUSAY KA NAMANG UMILAG, E!
8/30/07

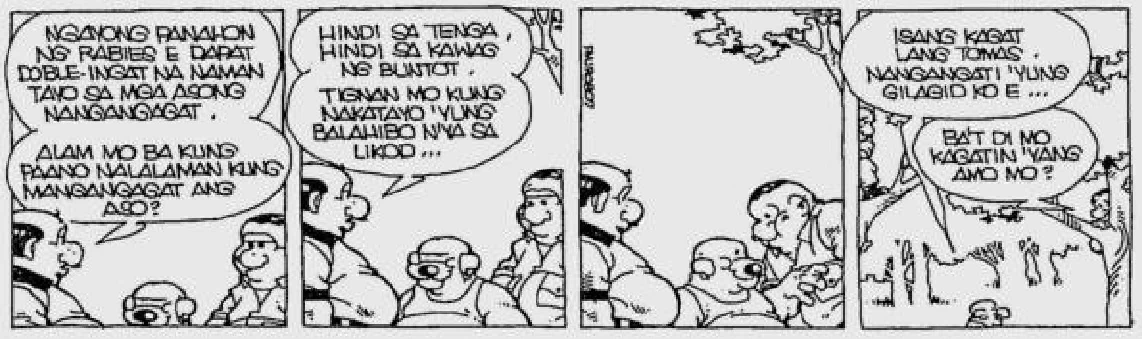
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


NAPTIME, WREN!
WHAP WHAP
yawn!
YAWN!
Z
WHAP WHAP WHAP
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

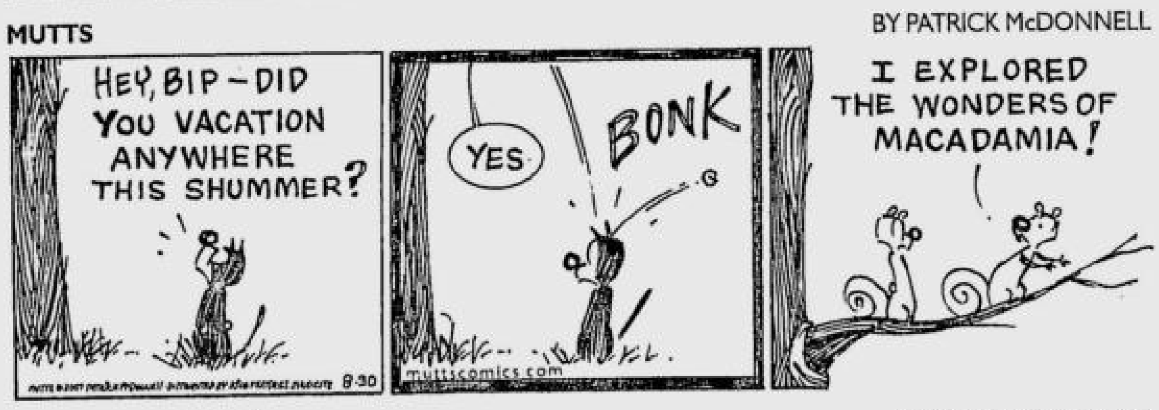
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NGAYONG PANAHON NG RABIES E DAPAT DOBLE-INGAT NA NAMAN TAYO SA MGA ASONG NANGANGAGAT.
ALAM MO BA KUNG PAANO NALALAMAN KUNG MANGANGAGAT ANG ASO?
HINDI SA TENGA, HINDI SA KAWAG NG BUNTOT.
TIGNAN MO KUNG NAKATAYO 'YUNG BALAHIBO NIYA SA LIKOD...
ISANG KAGAT LANG TOMAS. NANGANGATI 'YUNG GILAGID KO E...
BA'T DI MO KAGATIN 'YANG AMO MO?

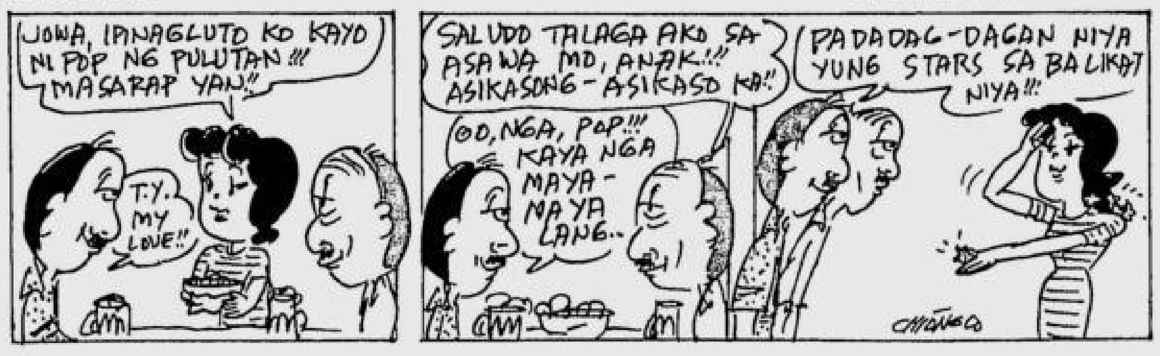
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, BIP – DID YOU VACATION ANYWHERE THIS SHUMMER?
YES
BONK
I EXPLORED THE WONDERS OF MACADAMIA!
8-30
muttscomics.com

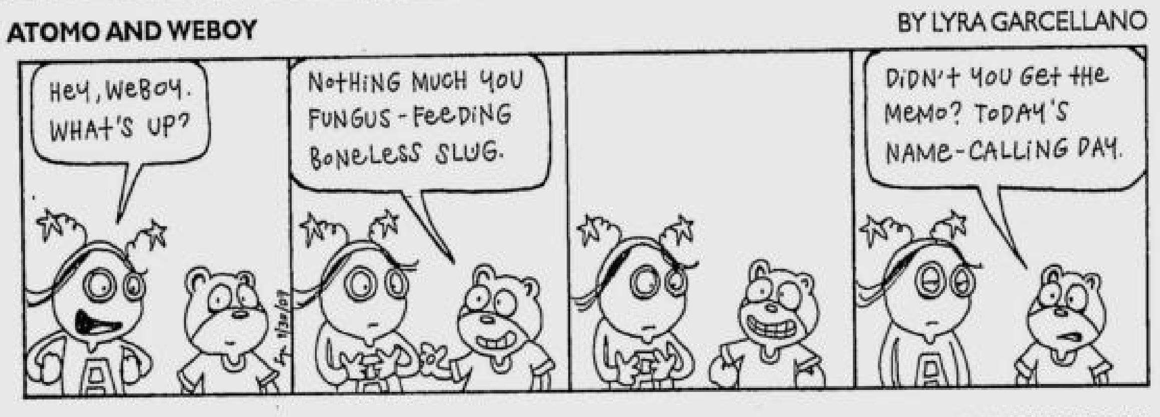
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, IPINAGLUTO KO KAYO NI POP NG PULUTAN!!! MASARAP YAN!!
T.Y. MY LOVE!!
SALUDO TALAGA AKO SA ASAWA MO, ANAK!!! ASIKASONG-ASIKASO KA!!
OO, NGA, POP!!! KAYA NGA MAYA-MAYA LANG..
PADADAG-DAGAN NIYA YUNG STARS SA BALIKAT NIYA!!!
CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

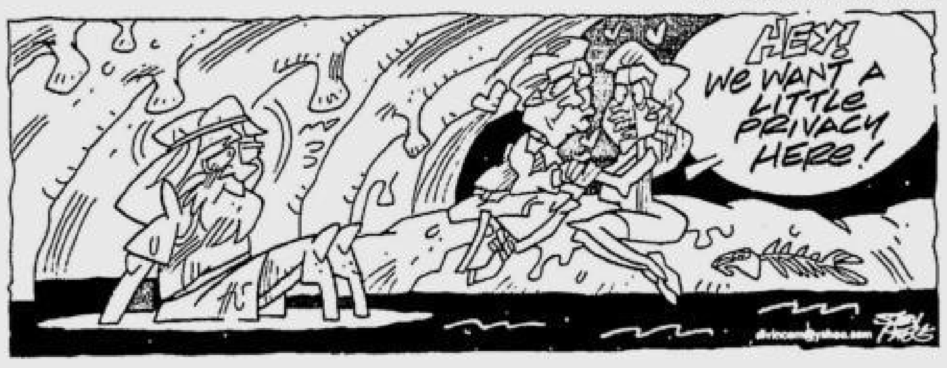
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, WeBoy. WHAT'S UP?
NotHING MUCH YoU FUNGUS-FeeDING BoNeLeSS SLUG.
DiDN't YoU Get tHe MeMo? ToDAY'S NAMe-CALLiNG DAY.
9/30/07

DIVINE COMEDY

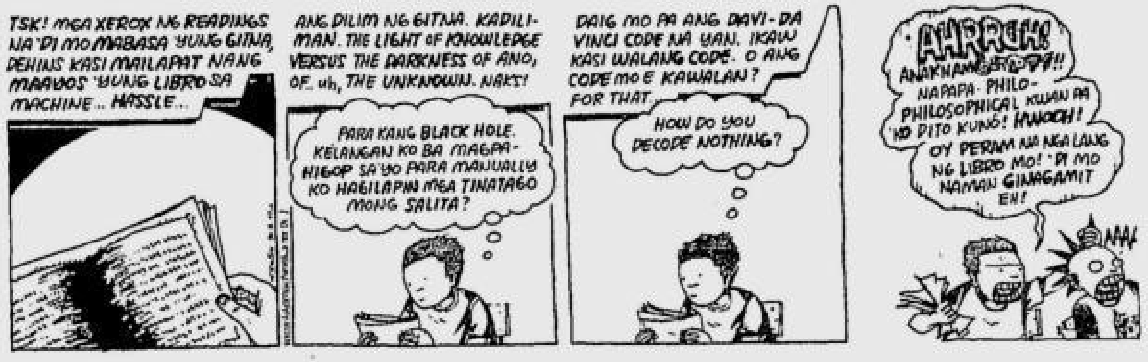
BY STEVEN PABALINAS

NAGULAT
SI JONAH
SA KANYANG
NATAGPUAN
SA LOOB NG
TIYAN NG
BALYENA
....


HEY! WE WANT A LITTLE PRIVACY HERE!

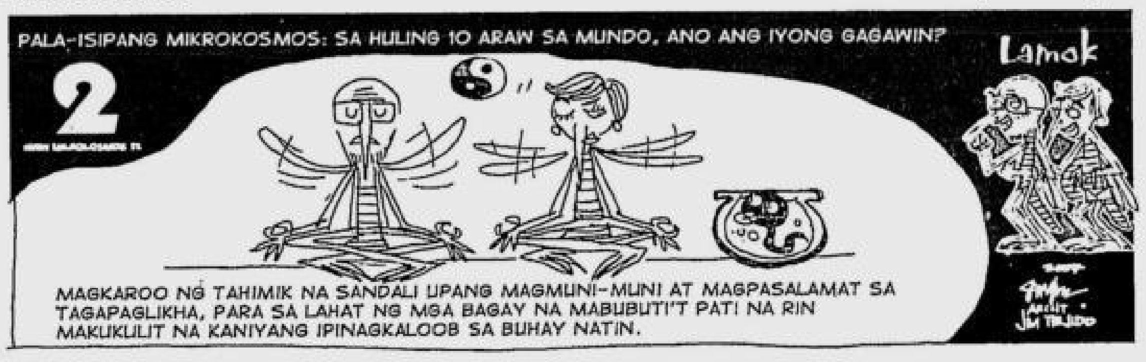
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK! MGA XEROX NG READINGS NA 'DI MO MABASA 'YUNG GITNA, DEHINS KASI MAILAPAT NANG MAAYOS 'YUNG LIBRO SA MACHINE.. HASSLE..
ANG DILIM NG GITNA. KADILIMAN. THE LIGHT OF KNOWLEDGE VERSUS THE DARKNESS OF ANO, OF, uh, THE UNKNOWN. NAKS!
PARA KANG BLACK HOLE. KELANGAN KO BA MAGPAHIGOP SA'YO PARA MANUALLY KO HAGILAPIN MGA TINATAGO MONG SALITA?
DAIG MO PA ANG DAVI-DA VINCI CODE NA YAN. IKAW KASI WALANG CODE. O ANG CODE MO E KAWALAN? FOR THAT...
HOW DO YOU DECODE NOTHING?
AHRRGH! ANAKNAMPOTEA!! NAPAPA-PHILOSOPHICAL KUAN PA KO DITO KUNG! HWOOH! OY PERAM NA NGA LANG NG LIBRO MO! 'DI MO NAMAN GINAGAMIT EH!

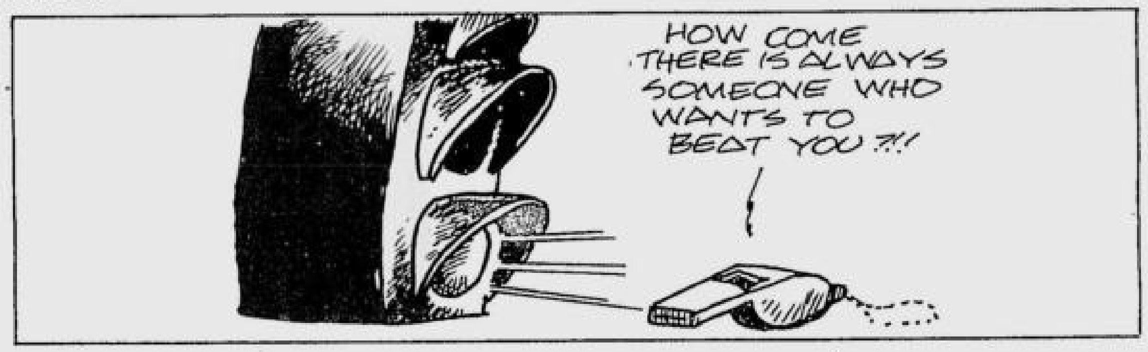
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PALA-ISIPANG MIKROKOSMOS: SA HULING 10 ARAW SA MUNDO, ANO ANG IYONG GAGAWIN?
2
Lamok
MAGKAROO NG TAHIMIK NA SANDALI UPANG MAGMUNI-MUNI AT MAGPASALAMAT SA TAGAPAGLIKHA, PARA SA LAHAT NG MGA BAGAY NA MABUBUTI'T PATI NA RIN MAKUKULIT NA KANIYANG IPINAGKALOOB SA BUHAY NATIN.
JM TEJIDO

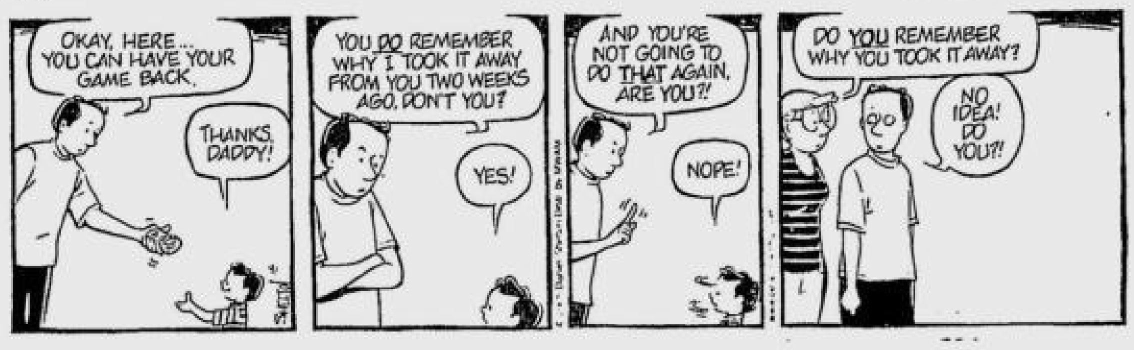
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


HOW COME THERE IS ALWAYS SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO BEAT YOU ?!!

BEN

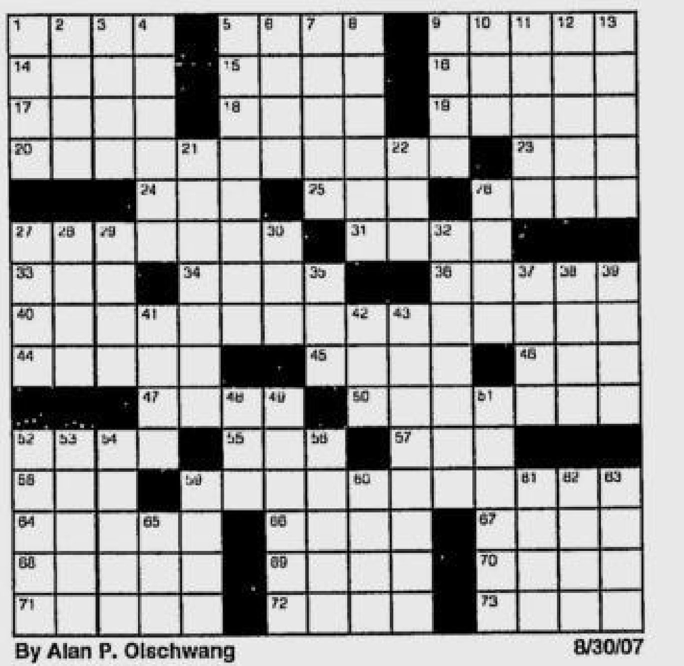
BY DANIEL SHELTON


OKAY, HERE... YOU CAN HAVE YOUR GAME BACK.
THANKS, DADDY!
YOU DO REMEMBER WHY I TOOK IT AWAY FROM YOU TWO WEEKS AGO, DON'T YOU?
YES!
AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DO THAT AGAIN, ARE YOU?!
NOPE!
DO YOU REMEMBER WHY YOU TOOK IT AWAY?
NO IDEA! DO YOU?!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 "Goldberg Variations" composer
5 Linguist Chomsky
9 Italian isle
14 Land unit
15 Arm bone
16 UFO captain
17 Brogue or oxford
18 Stop up
19 Extent
20 Start of a quip
23 Video-game shot
24 Hail to Caesar
25 DIY purchase
26 Sentry's command
27 "Higher Love" singer Steve
31 Exxon predecessor
33 NYC subway line
34 Nastase of tennis
36 Lift up
40 Part 2 of quip
44 Winger of films
45 Teri of "Tootsie"
46 Capital of Colombia?
47 Zeno's birthplace
50 Kimono wearers
52 Writer Anita
55 Young ladies' org.
57 Away from the prow
58 On the mark
59 End of quip
64 Indian leader
66 Folder contents
67 Joyous event
68 Terror
69 Butterfingers' exclamation
70 Bearing
71 NCO, fondly
72 Corrode
73 Piles on

DOWN
1 Riotous party
2 Painful throb
3 Toot one's own horn
4 Donkey's bray
5 Granular bodies in cells
6 Earthenware crock
7 Actress Aimee
8 Smith of "California Suite"
9 Freeway fillers
10 Styled after
11 Basso Ezio
12 Imperial
13 All thumbs
21 Shaped like an egg
22 Alps' data
26 Owl's outburst
27 Feral
28 "Dies __"
29 Crash-site grp.
30 What __ I tell you!
32 Posse director
35 H.S. subject
37 Craving
38 Mets' park
39 PGA props
41 Very in France
42 Sale clip-on
43 Supreme
48 One's self
49 Request
51 Blot on one's escutcheon
52 Comes down to earth
53 Massenet work
54 Survey choice
56 Vowels
59 Actor Law
60 High peaks
61 Foray
62 Toboggan, e.g.
63 Soaks up rays
65 Gossip sheet



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

8/30/07

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

G	O	B	I	■	L	A	M	B	■	F	R	E	S	H
A	L	A	N	■	A	V	E	R	■	R	U	M	O	R
R	I	M	E	■	L	O	N	E	■	A	N	I	L	E
B	O	A	R	D	A	N	D	W	I	G	G	L	E	■
■	■	■	T	E	L	■	■	S	L	R	■	■	■	■
C	A	R	■	E	A	C	H	■	E	A	S	T	E	R
A	D	O	S	■	N	O	A	H	■	N	O	R	S	E
B	E	D	A	N	D	B	R	E	A	T	H	I	N	G
E	L	I	S	E	■	S	E	E	N	■	O	N	E	A
R	E	N	E	G	E	■	S	P	E	D	■	E	S	L
■	■	■	■	L	O	A	■	■	C	O	O	■	■	■
■	L	I	V	I	N	G	A	N	D	E	L	B	O	W
G	U	L	A	G	■	O	R	E	O	■	I	R	M	A
A	R	E	T	E	■	R	A	N	T	■	V	A	I	N
T	E	R	S	E	■	A	L	E	E	■	E	T	T	E

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8/30/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're hardworking! You want to make money. You have two sides—tough and disciplined, and sociable and charming. It's important for you to be able to trust your intuition. You're highly persuasive when you want to be. In your early 50s, you will seek out ways to transform and improve yourself. Your year ahead will focus on partnerships and close friendships.
Birthdate of: Warren Buffet, CEO/philanthropist; Cameron Diaz, actress; Lisa Ling, TV journalist.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This can be a marvelous day for you. The Moon is in your sign, making a wonderful aspect to moneybags Jupiter. Go after what you want—you just might get it!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): If you work diligently, either alone or behind the scenes, you might be surprised by the support you'll drum up. Help from surprising sources is available now.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a wonderful day to schmooze with friends and groups. You feel witty, warm-hearted and friendly to everyone. People are glad to see you, and vice versa.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): It's easy to call attention to yourself at work today, especially in a favorable way. If you want others to endorse your ideas and jump on board, just say the word!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Do something out of the ordinary today. Go someplace you've never been before; meet people from other cultures or different countries. You're keen to expand your world today!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Gifts and goodies can come your way. If you want to borrow something or use something that someone else owns, today is the day to ask for it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel warm-hearted to partners, close friends and important clients and customers today. It's a good day for partnerships, negotiations, signing contracts and agreeing to things.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Whatever you do today might boost your earnings. It's an enjoyable day at work. Group activities will go very well. You might learn something valuable.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a playful, fun-loving, flirtatious, saucy day! Get out and enjoy yourself. Sports, the theater, the arts and lighthearted activities with children will delight you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Family discussions will go well today. Any kind of gathering at home, for whatever reason, can be a profitable, pleasant experience. This is also a great day for real estate deals.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel witty, alive and optimistic. This is a good day to enter into negotiations with others, especially siblings and relatives.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is an excellent day for business and commerce. If shopping, you'll enjoy what you get, and it will be profitable to you in the future.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

9		2	8					
		6		1	2			4
3								
		4	7					5
		1		9		6		
7					4	3		
								9
4			2	6		7		
					1	5		3

Difficulty Level ★★★

8/30

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	2	7	6	5	4	9	3	8
3	4	9	7	8	2	1	5	6
8	6	5	1	9	3	2	4	7
7	1	3	4	2	8	6	9	5
2	9	4	5	7	6	8	1	3
5	8	6	9	3	1	7	2	4
6	3	2	8	4	9	5	7	1
9	7	8	3	1	5	4	6	2
4	5	1	2	6	7	3	8	9

Difficulty Level ★★★

DINING OUT

MANGO DELIGHT
Pho Hoa Noodle House serves Vietnamese specialties. It offers popular Vietnamese noodles, vermicelli bowls, salads, rice toppings, a la carte dishes, and many more. You can cap your meal with Mango Crepe with Ice Cream, a dessert of fresh mangoes wrapped in green-colored crepe and floating in mango caramel syrup and chocolate cream. It is topped with vanilla ice cream. Pho Hoa is at City Walk 1, Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City (4212049 or 4212972, or text 0917-8EWCITY).

Restaurant's milk of choice

JACK'S LOFT, ONE OF THE very first restaurants to open at Eastwood City, offers an array of comfort food to help reduce stress.

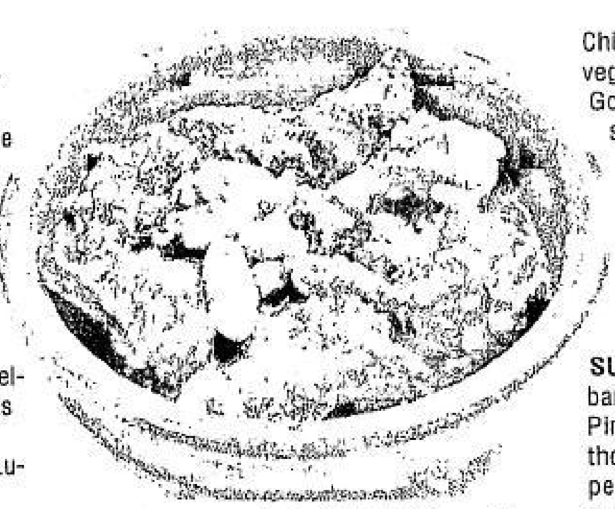
Its dessert section is particularly popular because of its specialty, Jack's Cheesecake, consisting of graham crumbs pastry base filled with cream cheese and eggs and topped with strawberry, blueberry or mango preserves. Also a favorite is Decadent Chocolate Cake, a rich concoction of caramel and ganache.

John Tian Seng, Jack's Loft manager, said they had started using Monmilk in their desserts, as well as shakes, coffee, soups and some main courses like beef stroganoff and grilled chicken. The milk, he said, was rich, creamy, tasty and naturally pure, making cakes more flavorful and rich.

Available at Buy Low Discount Store, Monmilk uses the Quick Evaporation process that regulates water content without altering basic milk composition. Thus, the thick consistency and creaminess of grassland milk is retained.

New tapas, entrees

ALBA RESTAURANT HAS ADDED NEW dishes to its 55 *tapas calientes* and *tapas frias*. Recently added to the menu are the meaty Carillada de Vaca *al vino rojo* and the seafood special Mejillones al Tigre. New cold *tapas* are Tortilla Catalana, Tostadas, Tomate and Mahi Mahi Fresco. Alba Restaurant is also introducing *Pa amb tomaquet*, Spanish tomato bread, among others. A new entrée is Costillas de Vaca and Pasta de Mariscos. Alba Restaurante Español is at 38 Polaris St., Bel-Air, Makati (8966950-51; 8904399); Tomas Morato corner Scout Lozano, Quezon City (9251912, 9287129, 4117052); and One Luna Lifestyle Center, Eastwood City, Libis (6312216-17).



ALBA Restaurant's Carillada de Vaca *al vino rojo*

GOLDEN HARBOUR features a unique fusion of Hong Kong and Filipino cooking. The HK-style Emerald Seafood Treasure Soup may prove a pleasant surprise, with its assorted seafood and sliced ham contained in fresh wintermelon. The HK-style Lak Mei Hot Pot is *chorizo* rice topped with sliced salted duck, Chinese sausage and liver sauce with Kaylan vegetable. On the other hand, the HK-style Golden Kenchi Hot Pot is a combination of sliced beef with Chinese herbs and mushroom. Also recommended by the chef is HK-style Prawn Sotanghon with Samsi egg. Golden Harbour serves more than 230 items. It is located at 138 West Ave., Quezon City, near North Edsa (9205883, 9280019-20).

SUPER BOWL OF CHINA Festival Mall Alabang offers Super Chinese Fiesta Merienda, Pinoy *merienda* with a Chinese twist. Have the afternoon snack buffet for only P129 per person. The promo features a noodle dish, soups, dimsum, congee and others with a single serving of iced tea or lemonade. It is available Monday-Saturday, 2:30-5:30 p.m. The Super Chinese Fiesta Merienda promo is available until Oct. 31 exclusively at Super Bowl of China Festival Mall Alabang.

Good Wine Good Food
with
Carlo Rossi
CALIFORNIA RED

Filipino foods are rich
in condiments and sauces.
This explains why rice
is important in the meals,
and why it is difficult to pair
wines with Filipino foods.
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smooth feel and light and
fruity taste, allow the palate
to sense the distinct features
of Filipino Cuisine.

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With Carlo Rossi California Red,
food and wine become a pleasurable experience.

Cod and bass recipes, crepe buffet

THE REGGIE ASPIRAS SCHOOL OF CULINARY Arts is offering the following classes:

Aug. 31—Gindara and Bass (all new): Cod with Smoked Garlic Butter, Chorizo Cod, Fried Cod with Strawberry Sauce, Seabass Ravioli with Garlic Butter, Pan-fried Seabass with Arugula Pesto and Mushroom Risotto, Deep-fried Whole Bass with Oriental Black Bean Sauce

Sept. 1—The Ultimate Crepe Buffet (special class, all new): 6 Crepe Recipes (herbed, plain, curry, truffle; dessert—citrus and chocolate), fillings (seafood, chicken, turkey, beef, vegetables and pork), sauces (Herbed Bechamel, Brown Mushroom, Cheese, Saffron Cream, Tomato Cream), condiments and fixings; over 15 crepe combinations, bonus: Crepe Samurai

Sept. 3—Unusual Snacks (all new): Fried Siopao Bread with Korobuta Asado; Coconut Milk Bread with Honey Ham, with Pan de Coco, Pata-pata (Sotanghon in Stewed Pork Leg); Asian Noodles with Oriental Garlic Bread

Sept. 5—Most Popular Chicken Dishes (all new): Truffle Oil Chicken, Garlic Chicken, Iberian Chicken, Honey Mustard Baked Chicken, Chorizo Chicken, side dishes

New class schedules are out for September-October. For complete schedule and inquiries, call 9289296/9273008/6335162.

Hindi mo kailangan mamasukan habang-buhay. Sa maliit na halagang P30 a day, meron kang pondong maaasahan with Aspire Savings Plan. Call 528-5200 for more information

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COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fenix

Kulinarya recipes in Cebu

AN INVITATION TO THE FILipino Food Festival at the Mactan Shangri-La Resort and Spa has become a welcome one for two years running now.

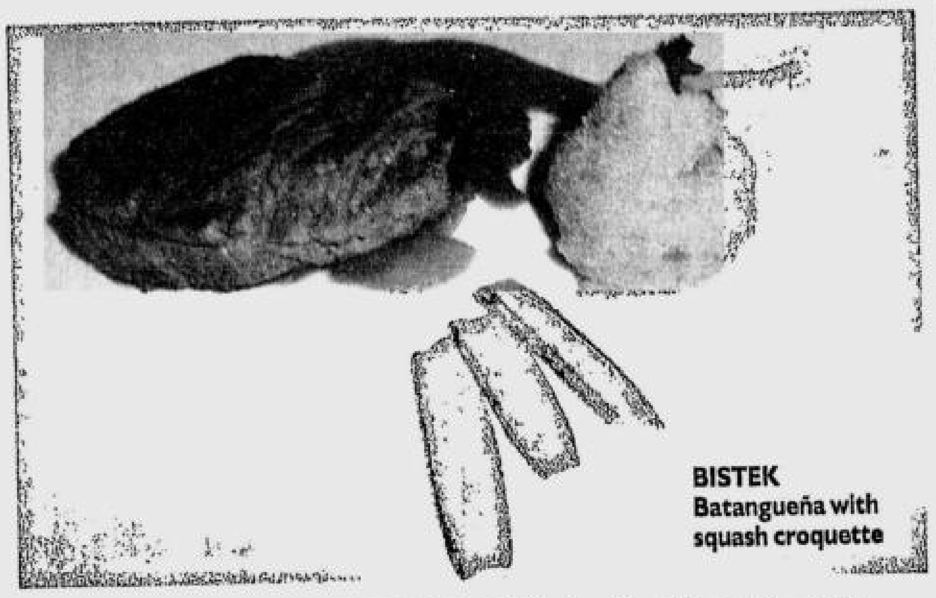
It is only part work and more vacation because the sea and accommodations are relaxing and the company of friends is great for food adventures.

The friends are Glenda Barretto of Via Mare and Myrna Segismundo of Restaurant 9501, who were asked once more to do the festival. Sonny Ong, Jr. of San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center joined them.

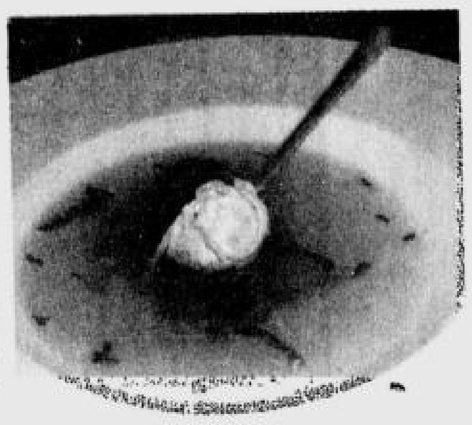
The menu consisted of recipes that will be in the book "Kulinarya," which will contain standardized recipes for Filipino dishes. The two weeks of the festival was an opportunity for the chefs, who are also part of the project, to test the recipes for both formal dining and buffet.

The opening dinner was held at the Ocean Pavilion of the resort. Four tables were dressed up for government officials and media, including Tourism Secretary Ace Durano and Governor Gwen Garcia.

Timothy Wright, resort general manager, welcomed the guests. Paintings by featured Cebu artist Andrew Barba on easels contributed to the colorful décor.



BISTEK
Batangueña with squash croquette



CHICKEN *binakol*

CHEFS Salvador Cristobal, Glenda Barretto, Myrna Segismundo and Miguel Yadao

Passes the test

The appetizer sampler included fish *kinilaw* in small glasses, *lumpiang ubod* in pouches and *ukoy* served with its vinegar dip. For the Cebuanos beside me, the *tanguigue kinilaw* (mackerel ceviche) was excellent, a great compliment from a people used to having their various *kinilaw* daily.

They also liked the way the *lumpiang ubod* was presented not in its usual spring roll form. The *ukoy*, though, could have been crisper and, for the cooks, smaller shrimps would have been better.

It told us, who were involved in Kulinarya, that instructions on last-minute frying and the size of the shrimps should be included in the recipe.

Before putting my spoon into the Ilonggo chicken *binakol*, I touched the side of my bowl and found it hot. That the soup was served at the right temperature was heartening.

The taste was certainly correct, light broth mixed in with coconut water that gave it a slightly sweetish flavor. And the chicken, instead of being cut, was ground and formed into a dumpling (quenelle) pierced with lemon grass. This is the way a traditional soup can be presented without taking away from its taste.

The next dish served was a personal favorite—*pinais na alimasag*. It was blue crab steamed then its meat picked, cooked in coconut cream with young coconut strips then put back into the carapace, wrapped in banana leaves and charcoal—broiled or grilled. (The recipe is in "Flavors of the Philippines" by Glenda Barretto).

Pinais means to steam in its own juice. The banana leaves give off that smoky aroma that enhances this dish.

At the buffet in Tides, the coffee shop of the resort, the *pinais* was the obvious hit, always the first offering to run out.

Bistek was served not in the usual way but as a real steak cut cooked to a perfect medium well, the *calamansi* and soy sauce mix spread out around it, the caramelized onion and a squash croquette on the side.

A must

Again, the dish came in hot, a plus and a must when serving Filipino food. At the Tides buffet, the *bistek* was on the carving table, a whole tenderloin sliced in thin pieces when ordered, with the soy-*calamansi* sauce and caramelized onion separate. It was a lesson in a new kind of presentation.

Dessert was served on two buffet tables. There was banana *turon*, made smaller and thinner. The *brazo de Mercedes* was also smaller than usual. The *leche flan* was cut into individual servings. And there was a variety of *kakanin* or rice cakes like *biko* and cassava cake.

We informed Secretary Durano that the Kulinarya book would be launched at the end of the year. He said it would complete a group of projects in his department such as the book on *hilot* for the "medical tourism" thrust. Kulinarya is part of the culinary tourism program.

The festival dishes are featured for lunch and dinner buffet at Tides until Sept. 2. Glenda and Myrna brought their respective chefs, Salvador Cristobal and Miguel Yadao, who not only cooked but taught the kitchen staff of the resort how to do the roster of dishes.

Though we knew the recipes by heart now from the many tasting and meetings for the Kulinarya project, we were surprised at how good the *pinatisang manok* turned out at the festival.

Chicken is boiled using water, some ginger strips and only first grade fish sauce, the *patis puro* that is amber in color with a mild flavor. The chicken emerged so tender with just a hint of the *patis*, the sauce thickened with mashed hard-boiled egg yolk and garnished with chili leaves.

We were happy that this Bulacan dish made its way to the South, making Cebuanos (who do not really use *patis* as dipping sauce much less use it for cooking), as well as the many foreigners at the resort, aware that there was much more to Filipino cooking than the usual.

Pinatisang Manok

Chicken Stewed in Fish Sauce

(from "Kulinarya")

1½ kg chicken thighs
2 eggs
2 c or 480 ml water
120 g fresh young ginger
About 10 stems/250 g fresh sili leaves
¼ c or 60 ml cooking oil
¼ c or 60 ml oil
¼ c or 60 ml *patis*
1½ c or 360 ml cold water

Preparation:

1. De-bone the chicken thighs and cut meat into cubes. Reserve the bones.
2. Hard-boil the eggs. Use only the yolks. Mash.
3. Peel the ginger. Cut into thin strips.
3. Remove the chili leaves from the stems. Wash.

Cooking:

1. In a preheated pan with oil, sauté ginger strips. Add the chicken pieces and the bones and the fish sauce. Sauté in high heat until the chicken pieces are golden in color.
2. Add the water and bring to a boil.
3. Lower the heat and simmer chicken until tender. Remove the bones.
4. Mix a little of the broth into the mashed egg yolks. Add mixture to pot.
5. Before removing from heat, add the *sili* leaves.

Serving suggestion: Arrange the chicken pieces in a bowl. Pour in the hot broth with the *sili* leaves. Serve hot.

Looking for more than just a pretty 'face'

From page C1

1½ c condensed milk
Violet food color, optional, depending on color of *ube*
2 tsp vanilla extract
¼ c butter

Mix *ube*, water, ½ cup butter and condensed milk in a heavy saucepan.

Continue to stir with a wooden spoon or a whisk until thick.

Add vanilla and remaining butter. Mix well.

Cool and serve.

IYA LAGDAMEO'S *ube pastillas*

Searching for figs

I have been trying to find figs for some time now and so far with no success. Would you know where I can buy this elusive fruit? I am really curious to taste and cook with it (like an itch you just have to scratch). Also, can you throw in some of your fave fig recipes?

KATS

Figs are flowers of the fig tree, not the fruit. Also known as a false or multiple fruit, they come from clusters of flowers and seeds that grow together to form a single mass.

Dried figs are high in dietary fiber and are a rich source of calcium. They are also said to be antioxidants, substances that fight disease-causing free radicals.

Dried figs are available all the time at Santi's Deli (tel. 7226274). Occasionally, fresh ones are available from Claudine (0917-8958191).

Foie (liver) and figs—what a perfect combination! Here's a recipe, Kats!

Scratch nor itch no more!

Chicken Liver Crostinis with Figs

1/3 c butter
1 c onions
1 tsp garlic
½ k cleaned chicken livers, coarsely chopped
1 bay leaf
½ tsp each fresh thyme, marjoram, sage, tarragon
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tbsp brandy
French bread, sliced thin and toasted

In a skillet, heat butter. Add onions and garlic, saute until translucent.

Add rest of the ingredients and cook liver until it changes color.

Strain liver of any remaining liquid. Mount on toasted French bread. Garnish with figs.

Fig Compote:

1 c figs, sliced
½ c port
1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp butter

Combine ingredients, except butter, in a saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil.

Simmer for 10 minutes over low heat. Add butter. Use as garnish for crostini.

You may use the same fig compote to top your pan-fried *foie gras*—delicious! Serve with mixed greens tossed in balsamic vinegar and olive oil. Garnish salad with roasted apples and sauteed fresh mushrooms.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph

9th tuna festival opens Sept. 1

GENERAL SANTOS CITY HOLDS the 9th Tuna Festival beginning Sept. 1. Theme this year is "One Pulse, One Force, One Cruise."

The annual event in the city known as the country's "Tuna Capital" celebrates the abundance of tuna in its waters. It coincides with 39th founding anniversary of the city.

The new festival song, "Sikatuna! Sikatunay!", will be launched during the festival. Bebot Haw is festival director.

Featured celebrities on Sept. 1 include Angelica Panganiban, Derek Ramsey and comedienne Pokwang. Other guest celebrities are: Bamboo on Sept. 4, and Imago and Rocksteady on Sept. 5, Smart Day.

Also on Sept. 5 is the launch of Coca Cola's Musicola shindig at the Party Zone.

Other activities include the first Gensan Eco Karera and fifth LBM (Langoy, Bugsay and Marathon). A grand parade on Sept. 5 caps the festival.

Every day of the week-long affair will end with a Sashimi night. A kite festival called Sea Creatures in the Sky, Fish Fest at the Fishport, and a *banca* race sponsored by Mitsubishi are also scheduled.

THE CONSUMER

The little airport that can

By Linda B. Bolido

THE MANILA DOMESTIC AIRPORT MAY be showing its age, still one cannot help but appreciate the modest efforts of the management to make it more comfortable and convenient for travelers.

And these little touches were in place even before the terminal fee was raised to P200.

For instance, despite the cramped space, the airport has set up a children's play room, and a massage cubicle.

The restrooms are relatively well-maintained although the fixtures obviously need to be replaced (actually, the whole airport needs a bigger space and more modern amenities) and janitors are constantly moving around picking and mopping up after people who seem to think littering anywhere is classy behavior.

But the one thing I admire most is how the airport organizes the taxi service for arriving passengers.

Although coupon cabs are available, one always has the option to take the metered taxis that are lined up in the terminal just outside the arrival area.

With only a security guard—sometimes aided by an airport personnel—manning the terminal, people stand in line and wait for their turn.

Occasionally, of course, you get the rude and crude person who tries to jump the line and a taxi driver that has just dropped off a fare trying to get ahead of the rest that have been waiting patiently.

As one passenger found out recently, that kind of behavior rarely yields good results.

A taxi maneuvered itself ahead of the rest and, as I refused to take it, the person behind me hastily got inside the cab, no doubt thinking she was being clever.

Not surprisingly she just as quickly got off after the driver quoted her a rate way beyond what she would pay by taking a metered taxi that was waiting in line.

Why the international airports—both the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and the Centennial Terminal—could not have a similar efficient system is beyond me.

Are they powerless against the coupon taxis that monopolize transport service in those airports?

Feedback

This brings me to the complaint of reader Celia de Jesus, a recurring one actually that authorities seem powerless to address although every now and then they huff and puff and threaten mayhem for offenders.

De Jesus puts it mildly in her e-mail when she says, "It is just so disappointing why several taxi drivers ask for additional charge apart from the actual meter (reading)."

It is not just disappointing, it is irritating and a violation of existing rules and regulations.

De Jesus said a driver would justify the additional charges as due to the distance he had to travel, the traffic, it was raining, gas was expensive, he had to pay to be able to wait in a taxi terminal or he did not have change.

(From experience, the people who collect "fees" in taxi terminals are in no way connected with the establishments. At the SM Mall of Asia, for instance, I noticed a couple of people wearing shirts similar to the uniform of MGE taxi drivers herding taxis and collecting a "fee" for it. At Harrison Plaza, people scamper to call a cab for customers and get P5 from the driver while still expecting a tip from the passenger.)

"What's the use of (having a taxi meter) if it won't be followed? Not all passengers can afford to give tips. And (the passenger is not encouraged) to give more (than the actual fare) with such an attitude. I hope the proper authority will take action. This should not be tolerated," de Jesus said.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati City; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart)
or email us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

THIS EXCLUSIVE photo of Elijah Palanca, left, was sent to INQUIRER by his Lola Bec-Bec. Elijah's parents are estranged couple Meryll Soriano, far left, and Bernard Palanca, center.

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Families reunited

By Marinel R. Cruz

THIS BABY REUNITED THE families of his estranged parents, if briefly.

TV actor Meryll Soriano delivered little Elijah Palanca at 10:01 Monday night at the Makati Medical Center, and both sides of his family tree were "proud and excited."

"Meryll was in great pain, but she smiled when she saw the baby," said Bec-Bec Soriano, who was beside her daughter throughout the labor. It was a normal delivery, with the baby weighing 6.5 lbs. The father is actor Bernard Palanca.

Meryll and Elijah were to be discharged yesterday.

It is the first grandchild for comedian-TV host Willie Revillame, Bec-Bec's former partner.

"The baby is so good-looking," the proud grandma told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone interview. "The shape of his face is like his mom's."

Four months

Meryll and Bernard tied the knot in a low-profile civil wedding last October at the San Juan Municipal Hall. The ceremony was officiated by Mayor JV Ejercito.

The couple, both exclusive artists of ABS-CBN, broke up after four months.

"Bernard and his family visited yesterday. They couldn't wait to see the baby. He's the first grandchild in Bernard's family, too," said Bec-Bec. "Meryll's grandparents, her cousin Mel, siblings Michael, Ken and Kaye were here as well."

Meryll's famous aunt, actress Maricel Soriano, is in Hawaii promoting a movie.

The new mom resumes work on the action-adventure soap series, "Super Ingo: Book 2," in a few months, Bec-Bec said.

ZAMORA as "SS Officer Sprakenhayt."

RP's Bruce Lee was 'very tired'

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE MORNING RAMON ZAMORA DIED of a heart attack, INQUIRER Entertainment learned, the action-comedy actor spoke to his son about quitting show business.

"My father said he still had many projects with ABS-CBN, but that he was already very tired," Bryan Zamora, 31, said. "I told him, *'Tay, 'wag kang magsalita nang ganyan.*"

Ramon, once regarded as "Bruce Lee of the Philippines," having starred in a string of martial arts movies in the 1970s, was at his home in Barangay Mayamot, Antipolo City, when he collapsed on Sunday night.

"He was taking a bath," Bryan recount-

RP's/D2

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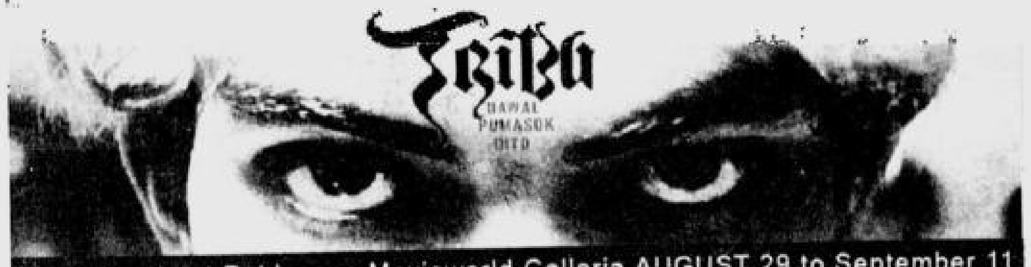

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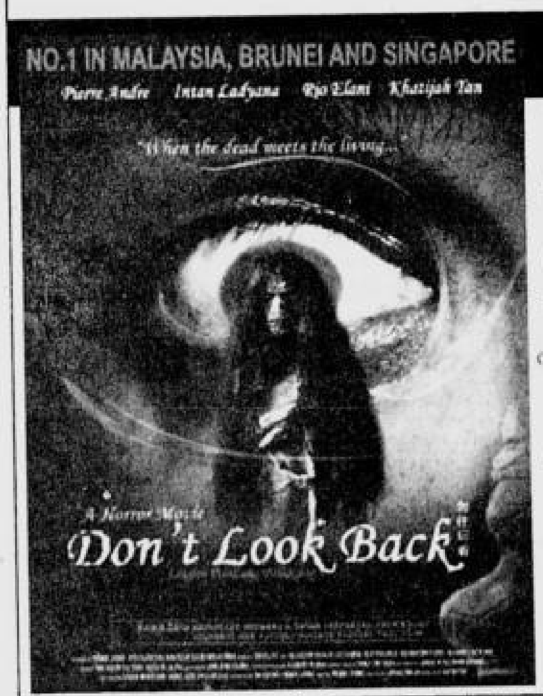
Pierre Andre Intan Ladyana Rio Elani Khatijah Tan
"When the dead meets the living..."
A Horror Movie
Don't Look Back

Don't Look Back

This horrifying and mysterious story is about a young man named Darma (Pierre Andre) who attempts to know the cause of death of Rose, his fiancee (Intan Ladyana), who was found dead in mysterious circumstances. Darma must now work with Rose's twin sister Sen to solve the mystery behind the death.

They begin their investigation with a visit to Rose's house, where Darma finds a bottle, and Rose's digital camera, which only deepens the mystery.

Bringing these unusual evidences home, Dharma finds himself facing horrifying events that flings his life into chaos.

Given a vacation by his boss (Jalaludin Hassan) at work, Darma seeks the help of his aunt Mak Lang (Khatijah Tan), who lives with her daughter Lin (Rio Elani).

At Kampung, Darma and Sen discover the shocking truth that whatever happens, they should never dare LOOK BACK, because when life meets death, anything can happen!

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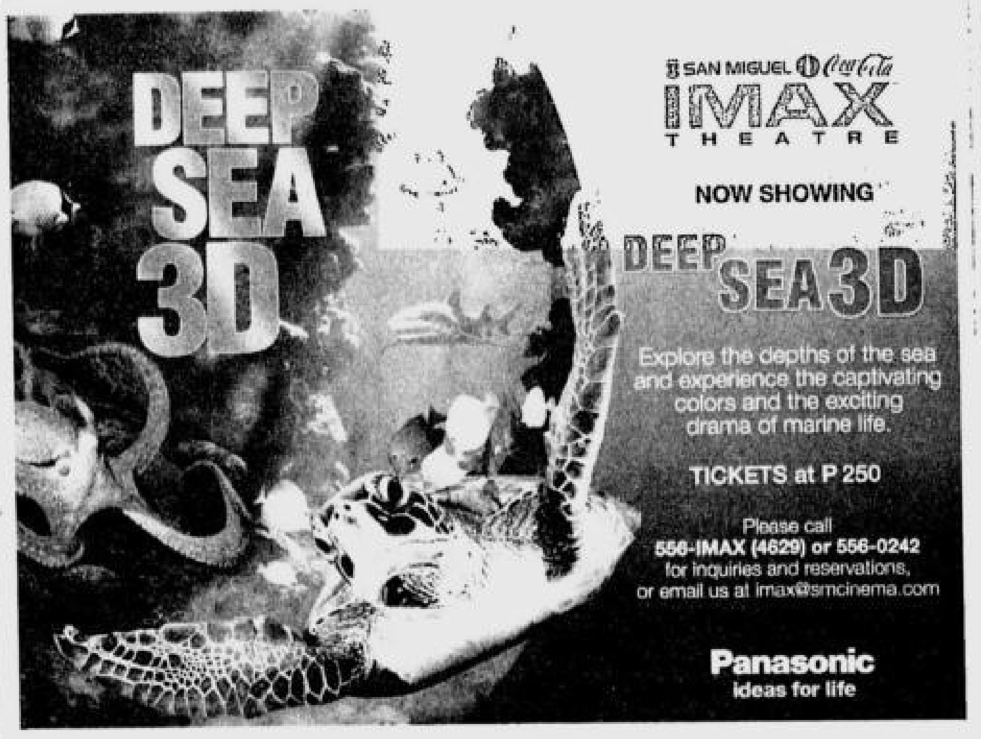

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-Feroze Khan

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FEEDBACK

From Marie Puyat (mariepuyat@gmail.com), Makati City:

Hi! Thanks so much for writing about Elliott Yamin's upcoming Philippine tour! He has a lot of fans in the country, and we're very excited about his visit. In fact, the "Yaminoys" have a yahoogroup and we already have more than 170 members! Fans from Japan, Korea and Indonesia are coming to the Philippines just to watch Elliott! We'd be glad to provide a fan's perspective if you need one for future articles.

RP's Bruce Lee was 'very tired'

From page D1

ed. "At home with him was a young niece and a maid. Some relatives tried to resuscitate him on the way to the hospital, but it was too late."

The actor was brought to the Marikina Valley Medical Hospital along Sumulong Highway in Marikina City at around 10 p.m. He was pronounced dead on arrival. He was 72.

A happy wake

Bryan said his father had left instructions for a happy wake, where only joyful songs would be played and sung.

Ramon is survived by his children Ronello, Gigi, Bryan, Gary, Zha Zha and John. His remains lie at the Marian Memorial Chapel, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City.

He was last seen on ABS-CBN's drama series "Maging Sino Ka Man."

Stunt man

Ramon started his career in 1953 as a stunt man and dancer in several LVN movies; he also danced on TV and in the theater.

He often spoofed Adolf Hitler, blaberring in bastardized German (*"Sprakenhayt!"*) on Channel 2's "Super Laff-in," This stint had won for him a Best Actor Citizen's Award for Television.

Biggest break

But his biggest break came when he starred in a series of kung fu movies like "Shadow of the Dragon" (1973), "Return of the Dragon" (1977), "Crime Fighters" (1978), "The Experts" (1979) and "Dalmacio Armas" (1983).

Annie Brazil at Mandarin tonight, Parokya at Folk Arts tomorrow

PAROKYA NI EDGAR

PAROKYA NI EDGAR has two reasons to celebrate in its major concert "Matira Matibay (Pyesta sa Parokya)" tomorrow at the Tanghalang Francisco Balagtas (Folk Arts Theater).

The band was signed to Universal Records after the late Bella Dy-Tan caught one of its gigs at Club Dredd 11 years ago.

Since then it has recorded nine albums, which have collectively sold more than 650,000 copies—a very good average by Philippine standards.

Its latest CD, "Matira Matibay PG-13 (Singles 1993-2007)," just went gold.

Fans would be glad to know that vocalist Vince Montaner, who has taken an indefinite leave from the band, rejoins his mates at the concert.

Performing as guest bands are Kamikazee, Gloc9, Sponge Cola, Urbandub and Moonstruck 88. Call 811-9999.

RACHEL Anne Wolfe

It's all in the genes

The jazz family of Annie Brazil and children Richard Merk and Rachel Anne Wolf perform in a one-night gig, "It's All in the Genes," tonight at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati.

Annie, a top-rate singer who still performs in weekly shows in New York, is thrilled by this rare musical reunion on stage. "What I always tell my children is that if you like music and you hear an inner voice to pursue it, then go for it," she says. To her surprise, Richard and Rachel have also become singers.

"But I didn't really push them to follow in my footsteps," Annie notes. "Then again, it didn't look like they had to be pushed. It's all in the genes, as they say."

Mother, son and daughter have new albums out: Annie, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow"; Richard, "Alaala"; and Rachel Anne, "Cool"—all under Richard's Manna Records label. The CDs are available at the gate before and after the Mandarin show.

Call 750-1481/892-0160 or 757-4720.

Folk music icon

Pinoy folk music icon Freddie Aguilar performs at LA Cafe, corner MH Del Pilar and Salas Streets, Ermita, Manila, on Sept. 22.

SHOW TIME

Bamboo campus tour

"Penshoppe Higher Learning: The Bamboo Campus Tour" moves to the University Theater, UP Diliman on Sept. 25 at 6 p.m.

Visit the nearest Penshoppe boutique for details.

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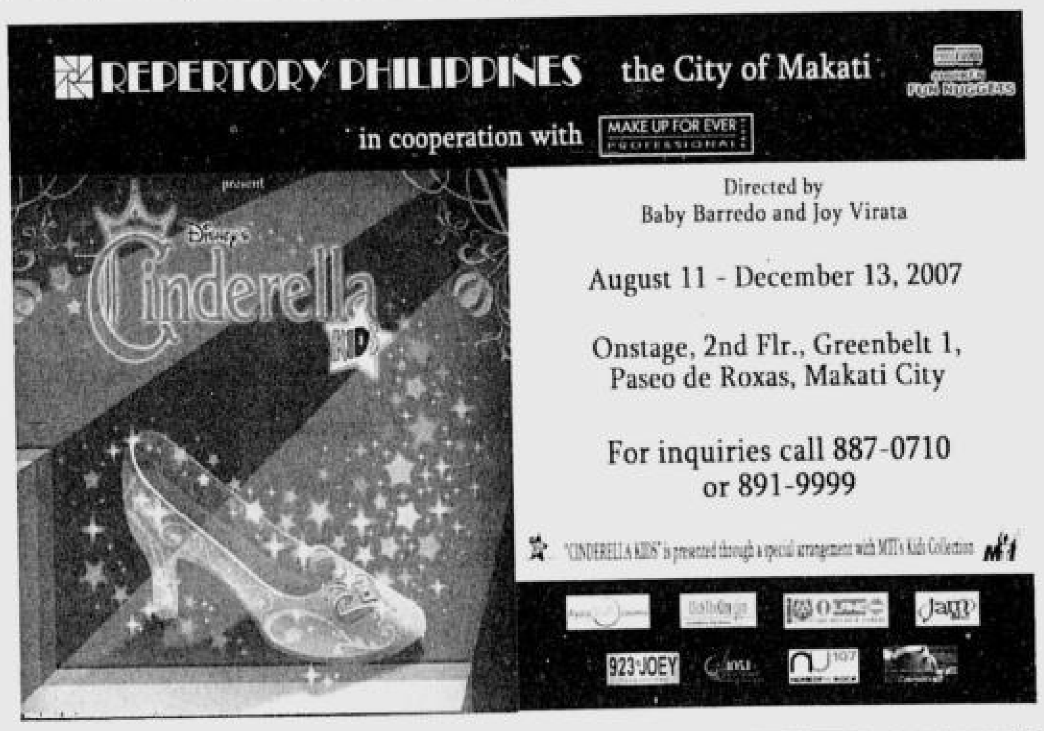

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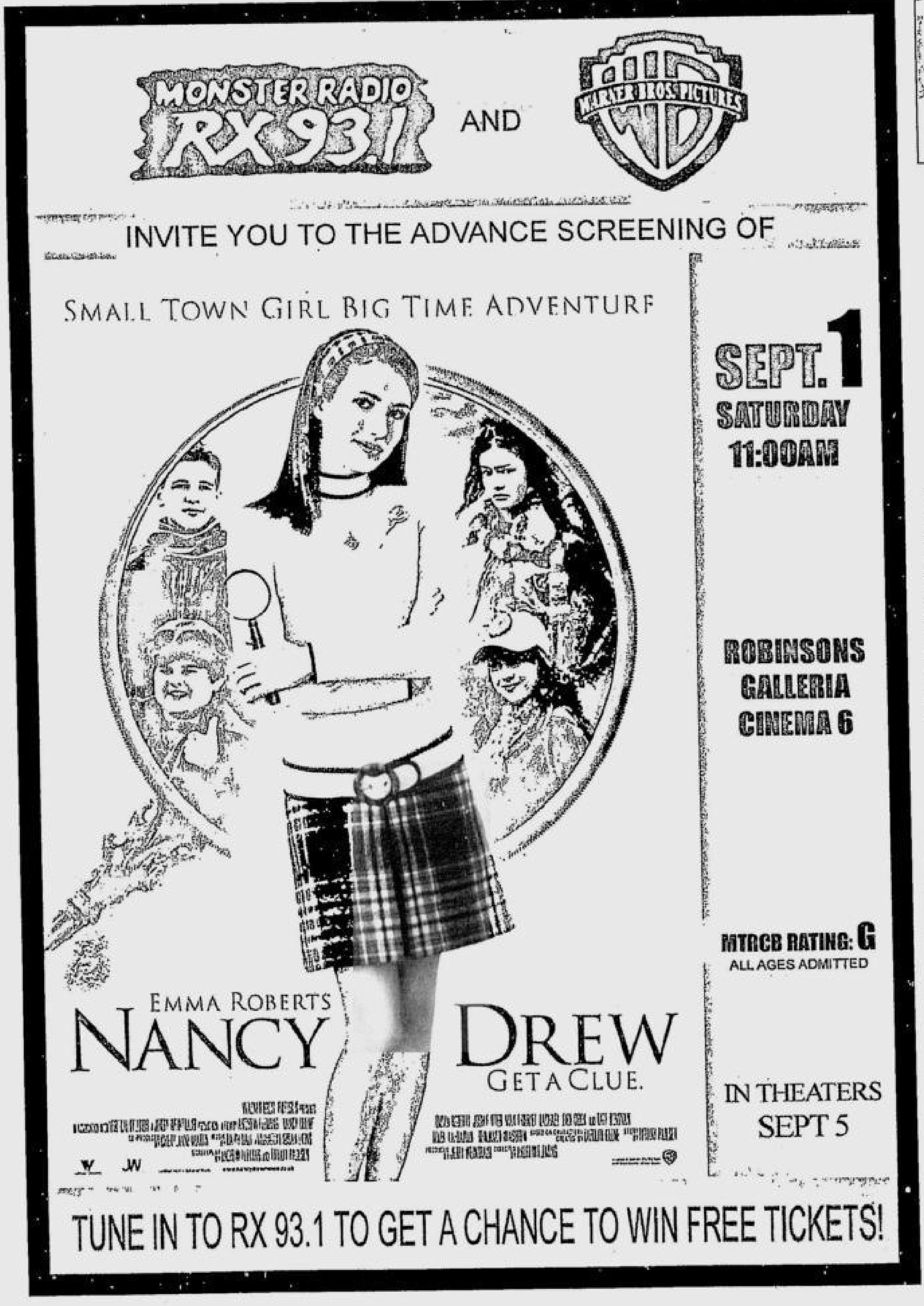

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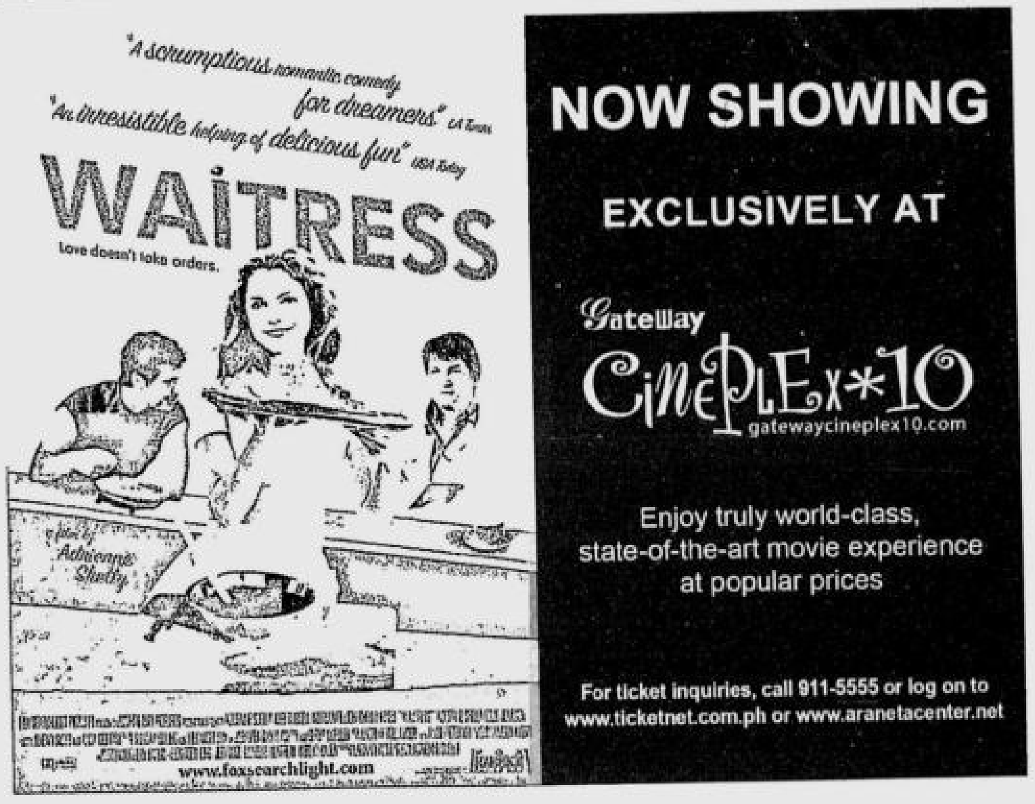

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TUNDO, MAYNILA
Tribu
BAWAL PUMASOK DITO
Won Best Film in the last Cinemalaya Film Competition
This film project is based on the 2006 Palanca Award winning scrrenplay, "Tribu", about the violent lives of street gang members, young urban hiphop poets in Tondo, as seen from the eyes of a 10 year old boy. The Proponent, a broadcast journalist, poet, writer and sociologist, produced a short documentray on this hiphop/gangsta phenomenon which aired on national television in 2001. But sensing that the TV feature is not enough, he went back to his Tondo roots and spent more time with various gangs (also called "tribes." Hence, the title), further documenting their experiences and street poetry/hiphop culture. The author / proponent believes that complexities and subtleties of the story of these ppor, yet highly talented urban youth can only truly be told using the more sophisticated language of cinema.
watch this only at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria
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INDIESINE

Five hot dogs – three with ketchup and mustard

From page D6

Never, ever

•Gretchen Malalad on being elbowed by former PBA player Bong Alvarez at the police station where he was brought after beating up a cabbie: "*Babae akong tao*. And, as a martial artist, we were taught *na* do not do the first strike, never ever. You hit back … to defend yourself. I hit him back *dahil pinoprotektahan ko ang sarili ko*."

•Bong Alvarez on the incident: "*Puro* one-sided *lang ang* [reports *na*] *lumalabas*."

•Almira Muhlach on her relationship with husband Bong Alvarez: "Honestly, totoo … *matagal na kaming nagkakaproblema ni* Bong. There was this time *na* I wanted to give up already."

•Almira on the latest controversy involving Bong: "*Sabi ko kay* Bong, *kung tayong dalawa lang madali ito*. But there are three kids that are really affected … *kaya sinasabi ko kay* Bong, this has to stop. We have three girls. This has to stop."

•Annabelle Rama, Almira's manager, who had rushed to the station: (*Ay, wala pala siyang sinabi*.)

Bonus *balita*

•Judy Ann Santos on getting pregnant: "*Sana* before I reach the age of 30, *mabuntis ako. Pero ang dami kasing* opportunities na *dumarating … Hindi ito* stable *na trabaho. Doon muna ako sa paghahanda*stage *bago ako mabuntis*."

•Jericho Rosales on his relationship with the parents of girlfriend Heart Evangelista: "*Medyo* distant *'yung* relationship *namin. Ang sinasabi lang sa akin ni* Heart, continue to love them and be patient *kasi ganyan talaga ang mga magulang. Eto ang pinakamatagal ko nang* relationship *sa buong buhay ko. Sa buong buhay ko, eto na 'yun. Siya na yung pinakamatagal ko nang kasama*." (Got that.)

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1408 PG13 1:40,3:50,6:00, 8:10,10:20	HAIRSPRAY G 12:40,3:05,5:30, 7:55,10:20	EVAN ALMIGHTY G 1:40,3:50,6:00, 8:10,10:20
LAST LEGION 12:50,3:15,5:40, 8:05,10:30	BOURNE ULTIMATUM PG13 2:30,5:00,7:30,10:00	THE INVASION PG13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30

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③ EVAN ALMIGHTY MTRCB GP 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
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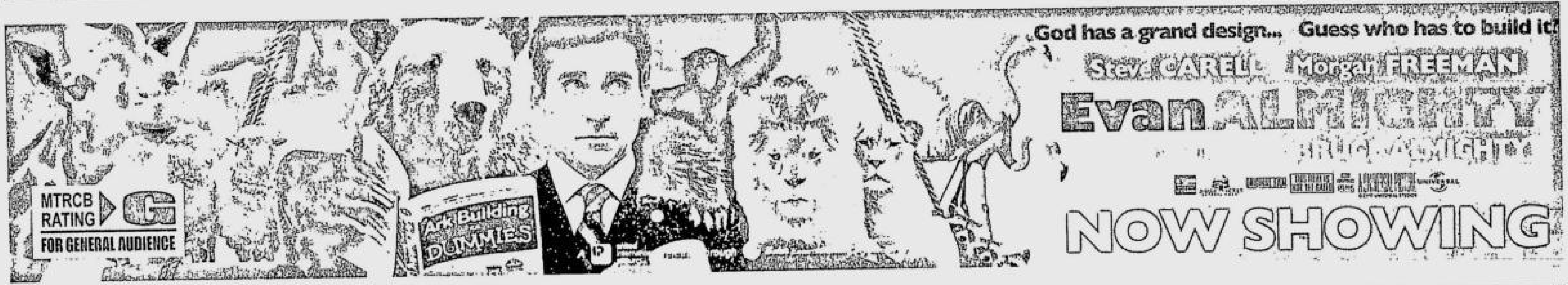

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GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE INVASION GUARANTEED SEATS	3 ARE WE DONE YET? GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE LAST LEGION GUARANTEED SEATS	5 HAIRSPRAY GUARANTEED SEATS		
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Ayala

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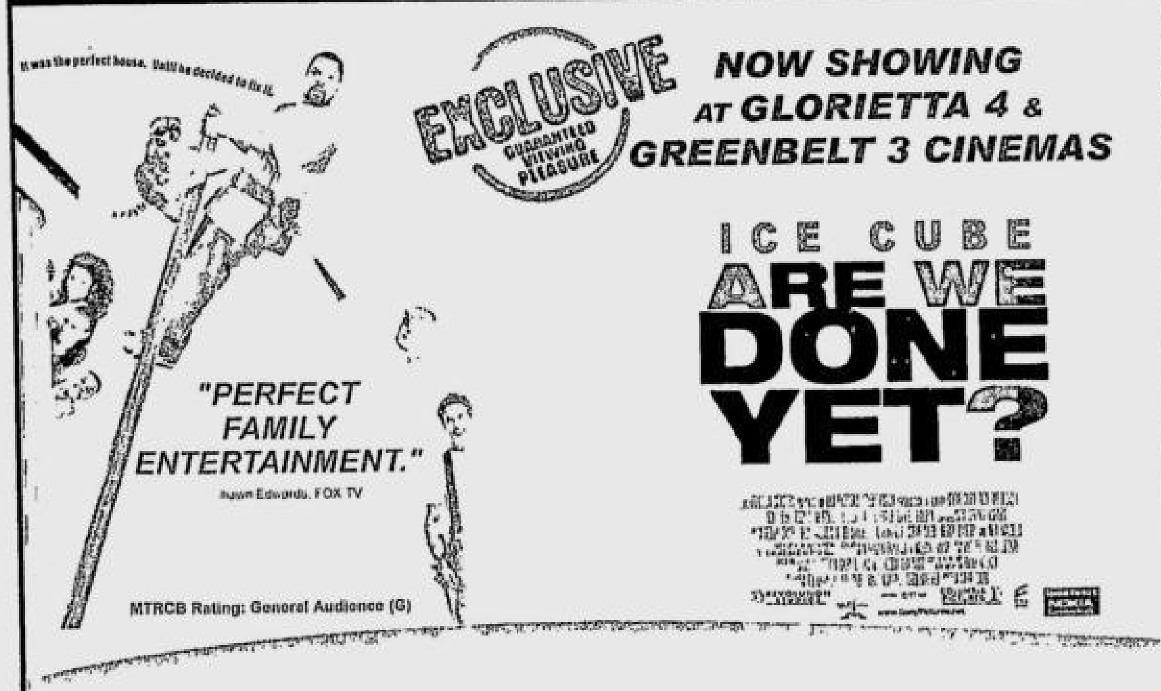

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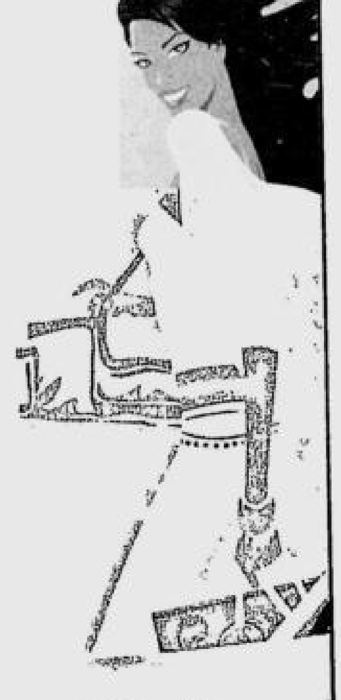

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

DID YOU KNOW…

Axed

LONDON—THE next series of British reality TV show "Celebrity Big Brother," which sparked a racist bullying row involving Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty, has been axed, broadcaster Channel 4 said.

The last series, aired earlier this year, sparked nearly 45,000 complaints from viewers as well as furious protests in India after Shetty was called "Shilpa Poppadum" by fellow contestants. *AFP*

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DONT LOOK BACK BOURNE ULTIMATUM	MY KUYA'S WEDDING	RUSH HOUR 3 HAIRSPRAY	
A LOVE STORY 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40	WAITRESS 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40	EVAN ALMIGHTY 12:30 / 2:50 / 5:10 / 7:30 / 9:50	THE INVASION 2:00 / 4:20 / 5:40 / 9:00

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1	LAST LEGION 12:15 / 3:05 / 5:55 / 8:45	2	1408 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40	3	THE INVASION 1:05 / 3:25 / 5:45 / 8:05
4	MY KUYA'S WEDDING 12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30	5	A LOVE STORY 12:20 / 3:00 / 5:40 / 8:20		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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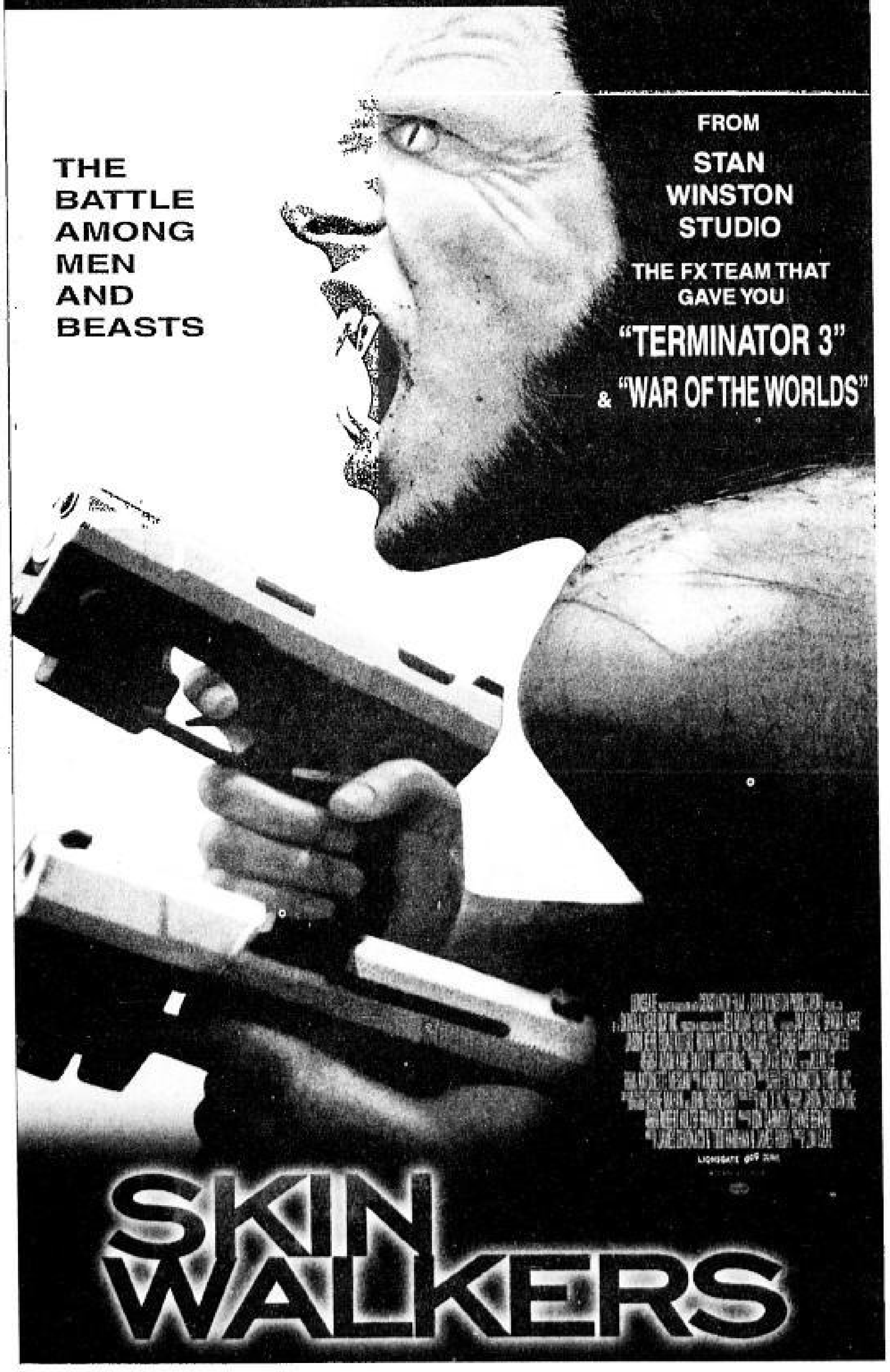
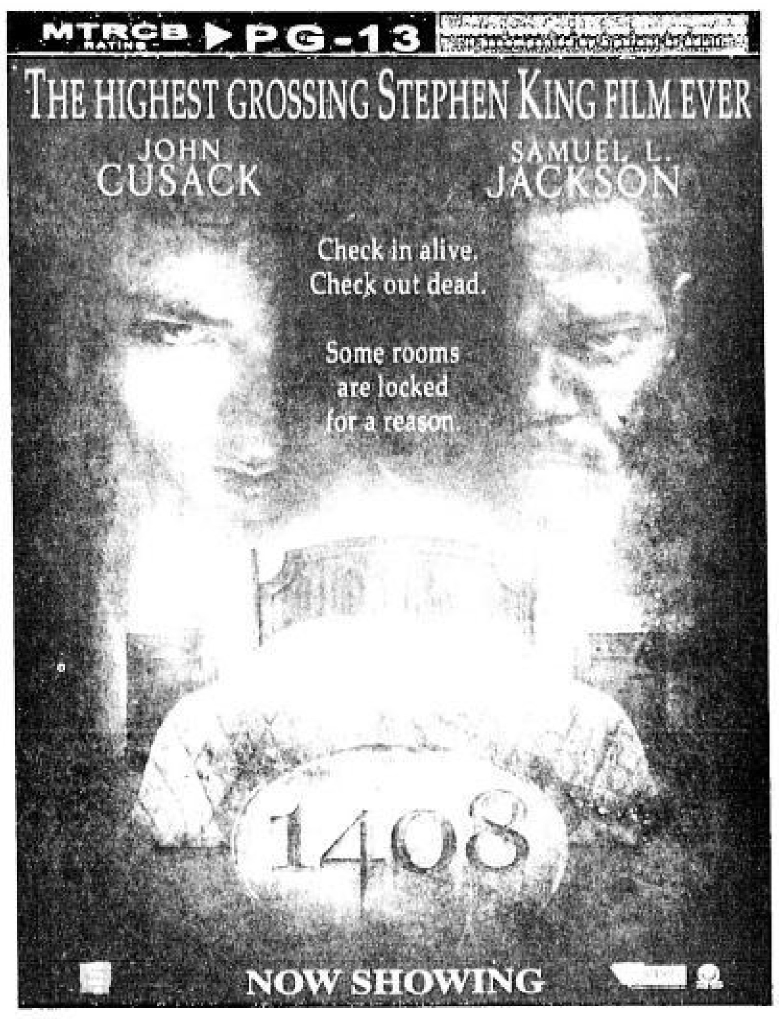


MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13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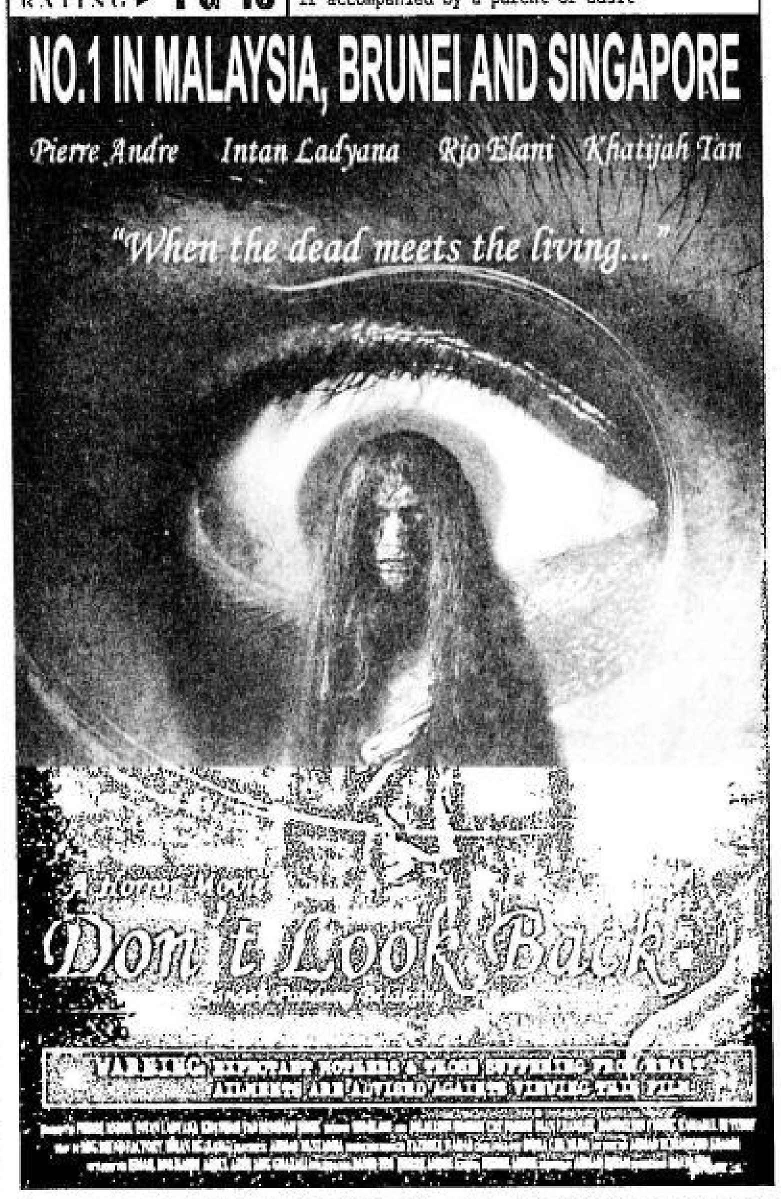
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4 A LOVE STORY

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3 THE INVATION
4 THE INVATION
5 LAST LEGION
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7 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
8 MY KUYAS WEDDING
9 A LOVE STORY
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2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
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4 A LOVE STORY

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The difference between 'best' and 'second best' in acting

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SEVERAL READERS have reacted to our article on the "overlooked" thespians who deserve to be on the list of 15 Best Actors recently run by two publications. Most of them agree that the overlooked likes of Ruben Rustia and Vic Silayan are among our best ever.

In addition, some readers have urged us to specify which actors on the list *shouldn't* be there. This is a game of "naughty, naughty"—played at our expense, since we're the ones who'll have to fend off the resulting brickbats from the "second-best" actors and their irate fans! So, pardon us for not agreeing to step on that land mine, thank you very much.

Let's look beyond personalities and figure out why some otherwise gifted actors end up falling short of greatness:

- An actor may shine as a dramatic performer in his youth, especially if he's mentored by our best directors. After he becomes popular, however, producers cast him in romantic comedies that become big hits but dilute his acting capital, and prevent him from developing his talent further.

After a few such *pa*-cute vehicles, the actor's asking price shoots up, but his ability could be permanently compromised.

Even if the actor values his talent and wants to give it the care and feeding it deserves, he's gotten used to the many perks of hit stardom, and is loath to return to the uncompromising basics.

Thus, we can admire the actor's early performance, but his entire career is deemed too spotty in terms of quality for him to be cited as one of our best screen thespians.

- Another actor established himself as a popular star mainly because of his good looks and entertaining performance style. Somewhere along the way in his long-running career, he learned to act and even won some awards.

In truth, however, his acting is only proficient and not competent, let alone inspired, so he's never really broken through in terms of the excellence of his portrayals.

So why did he win all those awards? Because our awards system is often subjective and otherwise flawed.

A word to the wise film buff, therefore: Judge not an actor's worth based on the awards he's received. The best proof of superior talent is the actor's actual performance, nothing else.

- A third actor is admired because his portrayals are deemed to be deeply felt, complex, psychologically troubled and insightful. He goes beyond the patina and gloss of stardom to really dig deep into his character's soul—or, so it seems.

In actuality, however, the actor's performances are too showily convoluted and constricted, so they similarly fall short of greatness, because they're all about the *process* (The Method), not the *product* (the character created).

There's a trivia in the arts that actors of this psychologically contorted sort should keep in mind: *True art hides itself.* Meaning, a great artist does difficult things, but he makes them look amazingly easy.

Also, an actor should *disappear* into the character he's playing. The self-consciously "psychological" actor calls too much attention to his own persona, so a "best" actor, he definitely is not.

Feedback

From Paul Mortel of Marikina City: "On a lazy Sunday afternoon, tune in to dwBR-FM 104.3 MHZ and be mesmerized by the golden sounds of 'oldies but goodies' being dished out by veteran DJs like Ernie Zarake on his program 'Echoes of the Stage and Cinema' 12 noon to 1 p.m., followed by the inimitable Jo San Diego on 'This I like,' 1-3 p.m.

"At 3-4 p.m. comes Barr Samson with 'You and the Past and the Music,' then Lito Gorospe with 'Mr. Music,' 4-5 p.m.

"What's more, listeners won't be 'bothered' by commercials—because there are none."

* * *

From Gemma Yanuza of Quezon City: "Another fine actor who hasn't been given important roles commensurate to his talent is Romnick Sarmenta. I saw him in a stage play and he was impressive. I also admire the acting of Tirso Cruz III, Ian Veneracion and Niño Muhlach, if only he'd be given another chance ..."

* * *

From Vince R. Pareja of Cebu City: "I have been compiling Boob-Tube Booboos and our group really finds them both funny and educational. Looking forward to the next batch."

HIGH SCHOOL classmates kiss Rhian Ramos in these snapshots circulating on the Net. "I'm not ashamed," she said in a TV interview." "*Para sa mga* 14-year-olds (she's 17 now), cute *'yon eh.*"

Amalia and Ogie: Post-birthday sentiments

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

TOO bad I wasn't feeling well, that's why I missed the birthday parties of two people close to my heart—Tita Nena (Amalia Fuentes) and Ogie Alcasid, who both turned a year more wonderful on Monday. They shared with me their post-birthday sentiments.

Tita Nena's bash was a gathering of close friends and relatives at her mansion. After the recent storm in her marriage, she has found inner peace.

"The crisis has brought loved ones closer to my side. Now I know what it means to celebrate life," she said.

Truly, pain carves our heart deeper so that it may contain more joy. When asked about her straying husband, La Amalia just laughed. "I no longer expected Joey (Stevens) to remember my birthday. He can't even remember his own age!"

Her daughter Liezl and kids brought her favorite caviar, cake and complete collection of original Elizabeth Taylor-Richard Burton movies. In turn, Tita Nena gave Liezl a tape of "Ibulong," which she was pregnant with her.

Lovers' prom

Ogie had a prom-themed party, a birthday gift from his ladylove Regine Velasquez. "The highlight was when Reg and I had our first dance. Also, when Martin Nievera, Gary V and Janno jammed with Side A and sang 'Heart to Heart'," Ogie said.

Does life really begin at 40 for him? "Life begins when you realize how beautiful it can be," he said. "If there were a song to best describe my life now, it would be 'This is the Moment'."

After coming out in the open about his romance with Regine, and his ex-wife Michelle Van Eimeren coming to Reg's rescue against her detractors, what else could Ogie ask for?

"To have kids with Regine. But we'll take it one step at a time." The songbird and the songwriter have definitely taken all the right steps so far and have a long happy way to go.

Birthday hugs, Ta Nena. Thanks for being my second mom. Every time I look at you, I see the woman I wanna be.

Birthday Cheers, Ogie sweetie... If I had three wishes, I'd wish for three copies of you.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

Five hot dogs—three with ketchup and mustard

By the Inquirer and INQUIRER.net Entertainment Staff

RUSHES

NEW YORK—Hot dogs from a Times Square street vendor? Helicopter to a Hurricane Katrina benefit in the Hamptons? All part of Brangelina's whirlwind New York weekend.

Megastars Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie were spotted Friday with kids Maddox, Zahara and Pax shopping at Lee's Art Shop in midtown Manhattan. Baby Shiloh was not there. According to the New York Post, the family then headed toward Times Square, where Pitt ordered five hot dogs from a street vendor—three with ketchup and mustard, two with just ketchup.

"I didn't know who he was," said vendor Mahmoud Omer, who added that Pitt wanted relish but he did not have any.

The celebrity couple enjoyed a culinary upgrade the next day when they attended a fundraiser at the home of Tribeca Film Festival co-founders Jane Rosenthal and Craig Hatkoff in Watermill, New York. *AP*

***

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend's show biz gabfests. (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

- JC de Vera on his budding romance with "Pati ba Pintig ng Puso" co-star Yasmien Kurdi: "*Totoo yon eh. Siyempre pag may* kiss *gusto ko 'yon. Minsan nadadala na sa sobrang paulit-ulit na halikan na 'yon.*" (Under adult supervision *pa 'yan.*)

- Yasmien on her relationship with JC: "*Hindi mo maiiwasan na ma*-develop *ka sa katrabaho lalo na pag may mga* love scenes." (That's how the cookie crumbles.)

KATRINA Halili

- Katrina Halili on rumors that Lucy Torres-Gomez was unhappy about her kissing scenes with Richard Gomez: "*Wala po siya dapat ikabahala. Wala namang flirt-an na nangyayari. Walang ganoon. Walang dapat ipagselos. Sobrang wala.* (*Wala sabi e.*)

Who's asking *ba*?

- Michelle Van Eimeren's appeal, for the public to accept ex-husband Ogie Alcasid's new love, Regine Velasquez: "*Lahat ng tao kailangan tanggapin ang buhay nila. Kung si* Regine *ang mahal niya, ako rin katabi niya. Parang sister ko 'yon.* Please ... *tanggapin n'yo siya. Mabait 'yon. Pagdating niya rito, lagi kaming masaya.*" (Something lost in translation here?)

KRISTINE Hermosa

- Regine's tearful reply: "You know how much I appreciate your friendship,*'yung* understanding mo, *yung pagtanggap mo sa akin, bilang* family. You welcomed me in your home (in Australia). Thank you so much."

- Michelle's message to Regine: "*Habang may buhay ako, may* breath *ako,* welcome *ka rito sa bahay ko, sa* family ko. *Kasi ikaw ang* family ko. *Mahal ka namin.*" (Couldn't they say these things to each other?)

- Ogie's message to Michelle: "Shelly, thank you."

- Michelle's reply: "*Okey naman 'yon.*" (*O, okey na ha*? Promise *ha*?)

No love life

- Kristine Hermosa on her love life amid reports she went out with someone named Rajiv during a vacation in Hong Kong: "*Ngayon wala eh.* Obvious *naman. Wala.* I go out a lot." (To HK, got it.)

- Diether Ocampo on Kristine's alleged date: "As far as I know she was there on vacation with her family. He's her friend. I know him—Rajiv. Normally she would let me know. Not in advance, probably, *pero* most of the time but she would let me know. She wouldn't keep me in the dark." (*'Yun naman pala.*)

When not to call media

- Ai-Ai de las Alas on sending out premature news that she was transferring to GMA-7, through a text message to INQUIRER Entertainment columnist Dolly Anne Carvajal:

MICHELLE Van Eimeren

"Actually *'yung* text *ko kay* Dolly Anne *pagkakamali ko talaga 'yon kasi na*-rattle *ako. Hindi ko alam kung saan ako tatakbo. Naipit ako eh. Sa* loyalty, *sa* word of honor, *sa wala akong trabaho. Halo-halo na. Eh nakasagot na ako kay ma'am* Wilma (Galvante). *Pipirma na lang ako. Nakasagot na ako sa kanya. Kinausap ko si* Tita Love (possibly Cory Vidanes, senior vice president for TV productions). *'Yun ang 'di ko nabasa, na hindi niya ako papayagan. Naisip ko, sabihin ko na lang kunwari nakapirma na ako ng kontrata kahit hindi pa para payagan ako. Pero* deep inside *talaga ayokong umalis dito dahil siyempre* loyalty *ko kasi sila naman ang nagpasikat sa akin sa pelikula pero ang tagal ko na kasing walang trabaho.*"

Never say never

- Ruffa Gutierrez, on the recent visit of Yilmaz Bektas: "*Marami kaming pinag-usapan.* This is just the beginning. *Marami pa kailangang ayusin.* So *...hindi kami nagkabalikan.* As of now, *mahirap ang sitwasyon namin.* So *ayokong magsalita nang tapos.* I don't want to make the same mistake." (Good girl.)

YASMIN Kurdi

FIVE/ D4

'World Island Wonder' tonight on NGC

ON NATIONAL Geographic Channel's "Megastructures: World Island Wonder," a team of developers in Dubai build an island chain in the shape of the world four kilometers off the coast.

The team uses more than 320 million cubic meters of sand—the largest amount of sand to be moved by man—to create 300 islands intricately shaped to resemble the world.

With strict guidelines on where each island must be placed, how will the team overcome this latest obstacle?

The episode airs tonight at 9 and tomorrow at 1 a.m.

'Cold Case'

"Cold Case Season 2," an investigative drama inspired by real, true-to-life cases, airs Thursdays beginning tonight at 9 on C/S.

The police drama stars Kathryn Morris as Detective Lilly Rush, an officer of a Philadelphia police division that specializes in investigating unsolved crimes.

Joining Rush in her investigations are her partner, Detective Scotty Valens (Danny Pino), and her mentor, Lt. John Stillman (John Finn).

KATHRYN Morris

'Koh-Lanta Palawan'

"Koh-Lanta Palawan;" the seventh installment of the French version of the famous "American Survivor" series, was shot on location, with travel show host Susan Calo-Medina and European reality adventure show presenter Denis Brogniart.

SUSAN Calo-Medina with Denis Brogniart

Brogniart, narrator of "Les Aventuriers de Koh-Lanta," exchanged notes with Calo-Medina in between takes.

The show is aired weekly on a prime time spot over TF1 Channel, the leading broadcast station in Europe and reaches over seven million viewers in France, Belgium, Switzerland and North Africa.

CLICK!

'WORLD Island Wonder'

'Bizarre Foods'

On "Bizarre Foods," Andrew Zimmern tastes local delicacies from around the globe, even if they're goat's head, tongue salad, lamb's eyes, boiled cow hooves, fried crickets, snail porridge, jellied moose nose and pigeon pie.

Exposing the beauty of both the locations and the traditions behind the food he consumes, he broadens the viewers' culinary horizons and encourages their palates to venture outside grilled sandwiches and hamburgers.

The episodes air on Discovery Lifestyle Networks every Wednesday, beginning Sept. 5, 10 to 11 p.m.

BUSINESS / B1

Stocks jump 3.45% but market direction still hinged on Wall St.

BUSINESS / B4

SSS opens P1-B lending facility for SMEs, micro firms

ACROSS / A17

Bishop links priest's murder to envy over new P5-M parish church

ENTERTAINMENT / I4

PDI man in Hollywood visits with Tom Cruise in Berlin shooting controversial movie

Joey vs Willie: Senate to probe 'Hello Papi'

PATI BA NAMAN YAN PINATULAN?

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

FROM "HELLO GARCI" to "Hello Papi." The Senate is turning its attention from the election scandal to a game show scandal that has been the talk of millions

JOEY/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, August 31, 2007 ★★ 13 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 264 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

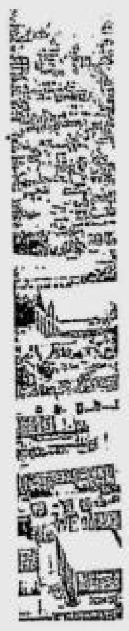
'Walis tingting' sweeps 'Tsong' to jail for 50 years

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE SANDIGANBAYAN FOUND NOTHING amusing in the defense of former Parañaque Mayor Joey "Tsong" Marquez on why he bought broomsticks (*walis tingting*) at an overprice 11 years ago and, for his trouble, sentenced the comedian yesterday to a maximum of 50 years in prison.

WALIS/ A8

Surprise! 7.5% growth



2nd quarter figure highest in 20 years

By Michael Lim Ubac and Michelle V. Remo

SURPRISING ECONOMISTS, THE Philippine economy grew at its fastest annual pace in 20 years in the second quarter as government spending and private consumption expanded.

The gross domestic product (the value of goods produced and services rendered, excluding income from abroad) grew 7.5 percent from 5.5 percent last year, bringing to 7.3 percent the average growth in the first half.

It was the highest annual growth rate since the 7.7 percent in the third quarter of 1986, the year dictator Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown.

The National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) said the first quarter GDP growth was 7.1 percent and not 6.9 percent as earlier announced.

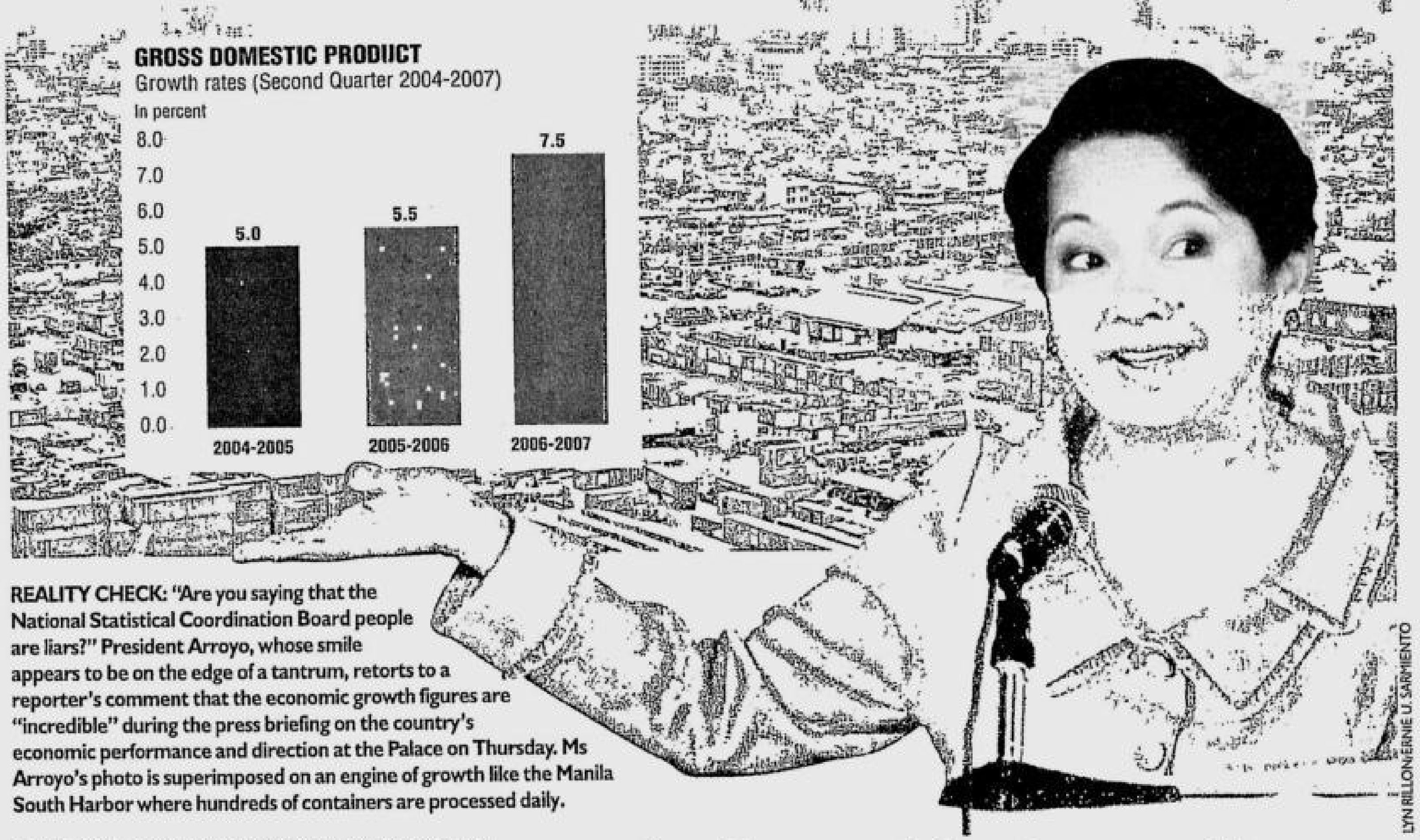
The gross national product (GDP plus income from abroad like remittances by overseas Filipino workers [OFWs]) expanded 8.3 percent, a substantial improvement over the 6.4-percent growth in the same quarter last year. Net factor income from abroad grew 16.6 percent.

The country's second-quarter GDP performance outshone neighbors, such as Malaysia, Hong Kong and Indonesia, but trailed Singapore's 8.6-percent and China's 11.9-percent annual expansion.

A beaming President Macapagal-Arroyo said "our economic plans succeeded."

"No one thought that we could get more revenues, cut down on tax cheats, strengthen the peso and move the stock market. No one thought, we could bring our budget into the balance, repay our debts and increase jobs, but we have done it," she said at a televised press conference.

SURPRISE!/ A10



REALITY CHECK: "Are you saying that the National Statistical Coordination Board people are liars?" President Arroyo, whose smile appears to be on the edge of a tantrum, retorts to a reporter's comment that the economic growth figures are "incredible" during the press briefing on the country's economic performance and direction at the Palace on Thursday. Ms Arroyo's photo is superimposed on an engine of growth like the Manila South Harbor where hundreds of containers are processed daily.

Challenged by journalist, GMA on verge of flaring up

By Michael Lim Ubac

IN AN INSTANT, PRESIDENT MACApagal-Arroyo's mood turned from euphoric to offensive when a reporter sounded disbelieving about her announcement that Philippine economic growth in the second quarter had exceeded everyone's expectations.

What prompted Ms Arroyo to display her famous temper on nationwide

CHALLENGED/ A10

No bail for Joma under Dutch law

By Cynthia D. Balana, TJ Burgonio and Volt Contreras

SELF-EXILED COMMUNIST LEADER JOSE Ma. Sison will be indicted today before a court in The Hague for ordering the murder of two former comrades in the Philippines, according to the Dutch Embassy in Manila.

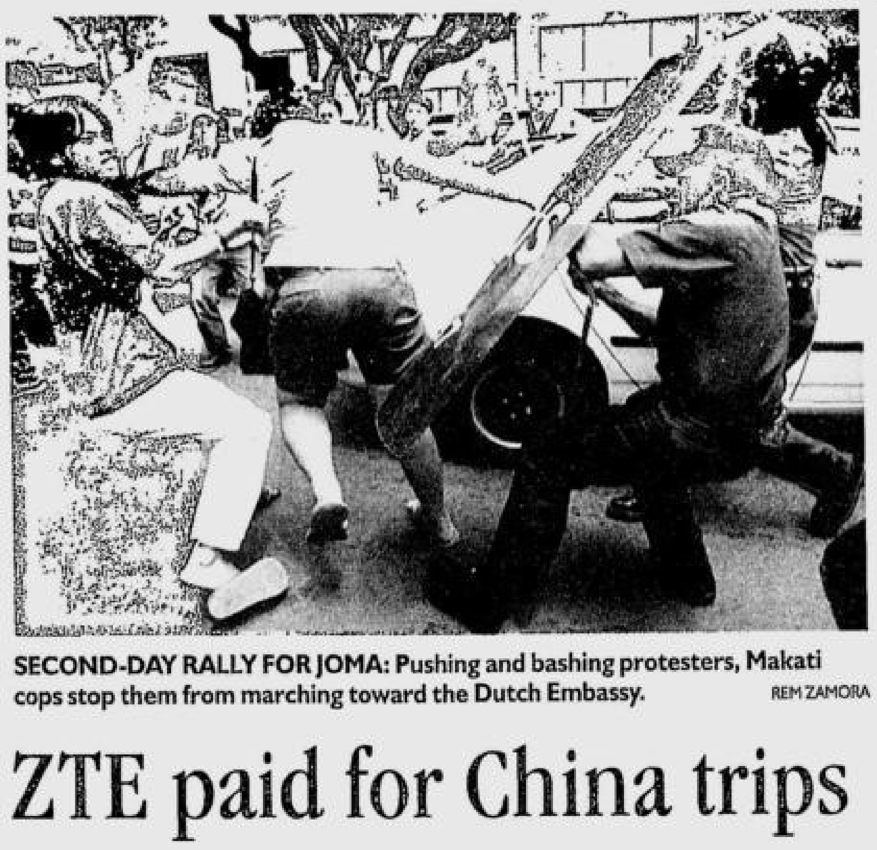
Ambassador Robert Vornis said Sison's arresting officer would present initial evidence for the judge to determine if there was need to extend the detention of the founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) for another 14 days.

If extended, a group of judges will again decide on whether to extend it again to a maximum of 90 days.

Wim de Bruin, a spokesperson of the Public Prosecutor's Office, said that posting bail was not a possibility under Dutch laws.

"There isn't a bail procedure. The judge will

NO BAIL/ A21



SECOND-DAY RALLY FOR JOMA: Pushing and bashing protesters, Makati cops stop them from marching toward the Dutch Embassy. REM ZAMORA

'PNP witness jailed, couldn't have given orders'

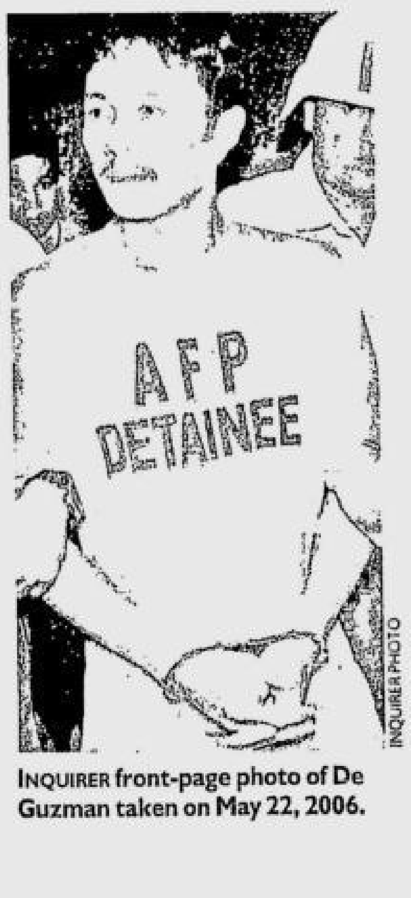
By Leila B. Salaverria

THE MOTHER OF JONAS BURGOS YESterday disputed the police version of her son's kidnapping that communists were involved, saying one guerrilla who claimed to have witnessed the abduction and the man who purportedly ordered him to shadow Burgos had been under military detention.

"They are twisting the issue to confuse us," Edita Burgos told reporters after a hearing at the Court of Appeals on her petition for habeas corpus to compel the military—her main suspect in the kidnapping—to release her son.

She referred to Emerito Lipio and Delfin

PNP WITNESS/ A21



INQUIRER front-page photo of De Guzman taken on May 22, 2006.

Abalos admits ZTE paid for China trips

THE OTHER SIDE: But Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos says freebies are a golfing tradition. He also denies any sexcapades in China. RUDY ESPERAS

By Kristine L. Alave

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS CHAIR BENjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday admitted that he and some officials of ZTE Corp., the Chinese firm that won the $329-million contract for the national broadband network project, were golfing buddies.

Abalos said the ZTE officials paid for his trips to China.

But he maintained that he never helped the company to win the NBN deal with the government, saying he didn't have the power to broker a government-to-government deal.

Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla in a privilege speech on Wednesday accused Abalos of being the conduit between the Arroyo administration and the Chinese government for the broadband deal, which aims to connect government agencies nationwide.

In his privilege speech, Padilla said Abalos

ABALOS/ A4

FOR DESAPARECIDOS

SC drafting writ of habeas data invoking right to truth

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT IS DRAFTING a new directive—called writ of habeas data—that will compel government and military officials to allow families of victims of enforced disappearances access to official documents by invoking "the right to truth."

Chief Justice Reynato Puno announced the new measure—now effectively used against dictatorial regimes in Latin America—in a speech on Aug. 25 before the College of Law alumni of Silliman University in Dumaguete City. A copy of his speech was given to reporters yesterday.

The writ of habeas data, Puno said, will not only require the military and other government agents to release information about the disappeared but also correct or destroy erroneous data gathered and stored against them.

The writ can be sought to gain access to military and police files, or can be resorted to by any citizen against any government agency to find out what information has been compiled against him or her, Puno added.

Puno noted that the 1987 Constitution, forged after the dark years of

SC DRAFTING/ A21

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Eastern Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/08/30/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Wiretapper vows more names

By Norman Bordadora and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

VIDAL DOBLE, THE FORMER Army sergeant who claims to be one of those involved in the Project Lighthouse bugging operation that netted the "Hello Garci" conversations, also heard conversations of many other high-ranking government officials, including a top election official.

Doble will reveal the identity of these persons in the proper forum and at the proper time, presumably at the revived inquiry into the Hello Garci wiretapping scandal involving alleged conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano in which the two allegedly discussed plans to rig the 2004 vote, lawyer Alex Avisado said.

Doble, who claims to have heard the alleged conversation between the President and Garcillano, was presented in a video testimony at the Senate last week by opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, in a bid to revive the probe.

Illegal act

Just as happened when the wiretaps first surfaced two years ago, opposition and administration senators tangled over the revival of the issue, with the latter opposing it on constitutional and legal grounds.

For one, wiretapping is an illegal act and playing the Hello Garci tapes during the Senate investigation would be a violation of the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

The Senate the other night averted a potentially divisive showdown by agreeing to reopen the Hello Garci case but leaving open the question of whether to listen to the controversial recordings and agreeing to let three committees conduct the probe instead of the whole Senate.

Project Lighthouse was a bugging operation carried out by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces (ISAFP)'s Military Intelligence Group 21, or MIG 21, supposedly to address threats against the Arroyo administration.

However, administration allies like Ms Arroyo's then chief of staff, Michael Defensor, also ended up being tapped, said Avisado.

"There is one interesting thing about Project Lighthouse that will startle many. There are more persons occupying high positions in government who were mentioned in the recordings," including a top election official, Avisado said in an interview.

Avisado said Doble would like the Hello Garci recordings to be played at the Senate probe so he can state under oath that the recordings were authentically those of Ms Arroyo and Garcillano.

"He'd be able to say who were talking to whom, who called and who answered. He would be able to identify his former colleagues in the Isafp," he said.

Avisado said that it was his position that the President and Garcillano must first had to being the ones whose conversations were tapped and file wiretapping charges against those responsible before the playing of the recordings at the Senate can be considered illegal.

"How can [anybody] be charged with violation of the Anti-Wiretapping Law if there is nobody coming out to say that he was the victim of wiretapping," he said.

Avisado said Doble is prepared to face criminal charges as a result of his admission that he was part of the Project Lighthouse operation.

GMA no target

Lacson, who initiated the attempt to revive the Hello Garci case, yesterday claimed the President was not the target of the renewed probe and that the tapped conversations need not be played again.

He said the Senate investigation would zero in on the top Cabinet official who ordered the wiretaps and the wiretapped conversations of other public officials as revealed by Doble.

"We've gone past that era [the President's alleged rigging of the 2004 elections] in the impeachment. We're not after impeaching her. Personally I'd just want to have closure to this issue. We're not really after the necks of anybody," said Lacson at the Kapihan sa Senado.

Lacson said the Senate was more interested in the brains behind the wiretapping operation. He immediately discounted the President among the suspects.

PRE-GAME HUDDLE. Senate President Manny Villar talks to members of the Senate secretariat before yesterday's closed-door caucus at the Senate, which decided to assign the reinvestigation of the "Hello Garci" scandal to three committees instead of the committee of the whole.

ROGER MARGALLO

Colleges to teach human rights

CITING A REPORTED UPSURGE of extrajudicial killings in the country, the 160-member Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU) has proposed the teaching of human rights in the tertiary education curriculum.

The influential group plans to discuss the project with the Commission on Human Rights to formalize its plan, said PACU president Gonzalo Duque.

"Subsequently, we will require our students to teach human rights to the public during their community outreach programs," said Duque, head of the Lyceum Northwestern University in Dagupan City.

In a statement issued during the 75th anniversary of PACU, Duque also said the group would "take the initiative of responding to environmental issues by aligning ourselves with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in its tree-planting programs."

"We shall also respond to health issues by supporting the Department of Health's information campaigns whereby we shall emphasize the truth about child care nutrition, sex education and other issues of relative importance to the youth," he said.

The exercise of corporate social responsibility aims to "establish PACU as an association that also identifies and reaches out to the people and to pertinent social and environmental undertakings of the government."

As its "new paradigm," the group plans to "exert more influence deep into the politics and bureaucracy of the various legislative and regulatory bodies that control higher education institutions (HEIs)."

"We seek to influence them from the inside out in order to advocate a period of dispensation that would either allow HEIs to be more self-regulating or ensure that future policies would be aligned to advocacies of mutual interest as defined by HEIs," said Duque.

Duque noted "for decades, HEIs have relied on the leadership of various HEI-regulating bodies."

Apparently referring to, among others, the Commission on Higher Education or CHEd, Duque said "for some reason they have grown detached from the realities dictated by the employment market." *Jerry E. Esplanada*

Lawyer wants new Erap witness 'noted'

A LAWYER YESTERDAY TOLD the Sandiganbayan that a "potential witness" for deposed President Joseph Estrada has returned from Canada after being "suppressed," purportedly by people identified with the Arroyo administration.

Cirilo Avila filed a "manifestation in intervention" with the antigraft court that has been trying Estrada's P4-billion plunder case for six years and told reporters afterward that the petition was intended to lay the ground for a mistrial, even at this point when the court is expected to be just days away from handing down a decision.

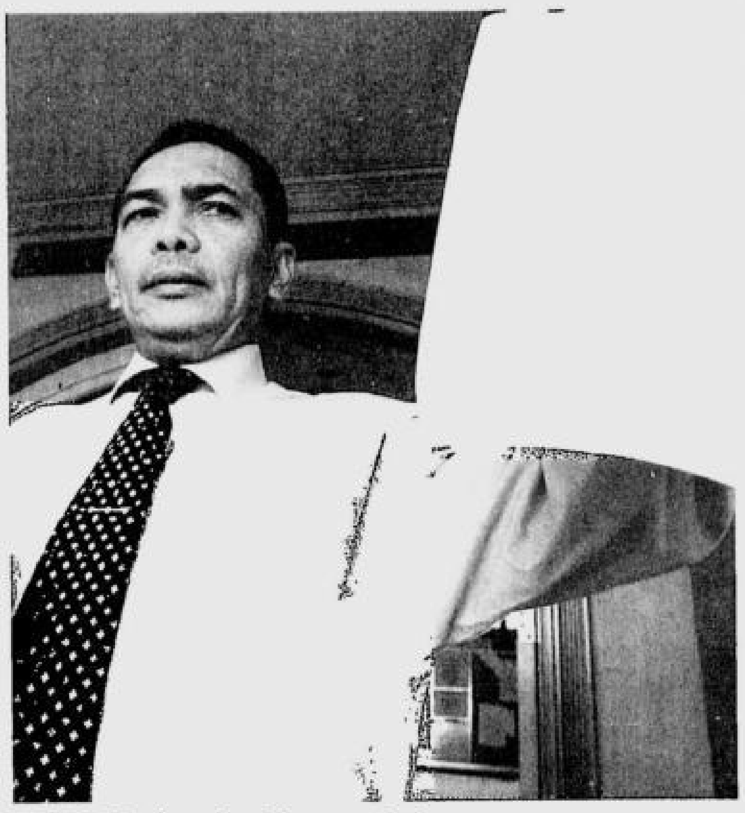
Avila claimed to represent Federico Manrique, "an old acquaintance and an ally in past anti-corruption drives." He said Manrique could have given testimony "that would tend to favor the accused."

Avila claimed in his pleading that Malacañang had hatched a conspiracy to silence Manrique. The plot, he said, went so far as to have Manrique and his family "secured and brought to Canada on diplomatic status" by virtue of a "confidential directive" from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Avila said Manrique was with the watchdog group Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption in 2001 when asked by then Ombudsman Aniano Desierto to help draft a criminal complaint against Estrada on behalf of the VACC.

He claimed that the supposed complaint of the VACC in connection with the lesser charge of perjury against Estrada was subsequently altered, which included the ante-dating of documents.

Avila did not appear upbeat about the prospects of his motion, telling reporters that simply having his motion "noted" by the justices would be just fine by him. *Volt Contreras*



AVILA: 'Manifestation is intervention'

Magdalo recruiting anew, Bicol cops say

By Alcuin Papa and DJ Yap

POLICE IN THE BICOL REGION confirmed yesterday that two members of the Magdalo group that launched the so-called Oakwood mutiny in July 2003 were now in the area recruiting members for a fresh attempt to destabilize the government.

Senior Superintendent Balligi Tira disclosed that police authorities had received intelligence reports that two Magdalo members were moving "discreetly" in the Bicol region and that police were monitoring their movements.

"We are checking them out. If their activities will warrant that they be arrested, we will not hesitate to arrest them," Tira said.

He added that the Bicol police was "ready to thwart all antigovernment forces either from the right, left or extremist groups that will try to destabilize the government."

In July 27, 2003, some 300 junior officers took over the former Oakwood Premier Hotel in the Makati business district in a failed effort to displace the government.

The mutineers surrendered to government forces after 18 hours of a tense standoff. Almost one-third of the soldiers were released after it was determined that their leaders deceived them into joining the Magdalo.

One of their leaders, former Navy officer Antonio Trillanes IV ran and won a seat in the Senate.

The Makati court handling the coup d'etat case of Trillanes will hear today his motion asking for reconsideration of the ruling that rejected his request for furlough to attend Senate sessions.

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Emergency agri funds used for TV sets, curtains

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE spent more than P2 million in emergency livelihood funds intended for farmers on television sets, gasoline, curtains and car tires, according to a Commission on Audit report.

It also said that the department's Davao regional office purchased 202 mobile phone units worth P2.1 million over the past six years, allowing some officials and employees to have more than one unit each.

The use of the funds, taken from the Support for Emergency Livelihood Assistance Program (Selap), were not "legitimate expenditures" for the program, the COA said in its 2006 audit report on the Department of Agriculture.

It warned the DA against charging expenses out of the Selap funds which were not related to the implementation of the program.

"In effect, funds intended for rural infrastructure projects were not utilized in accordance with the purpose, thus depriving the rural folk of availing the benefits for their socio-economic uplift," the government auditors said in the report.

According to Selap guidelines, the funds were allotted for farm-to-market roads, post-harvest facilities, irrigation and livelihood projects and rural infrastructure projects.

But the DA explained that the expenses incurred were in support of regional field operations that are a component part of the program, which include monitoring, evaluation and rehabilitation of the regional office building.

The report also disclosed that several officers and employees of the regional field units in Cagayan Valley, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Davao and Caraga were issued more than one cellular phone each in violation of COA prohibition against "excessive expenditures."

"Some of these units were very sophisticated," noted the audit team.

COA rules explain excessive as meaning "unreasonable expense or expenses incurred at an immoderate quantity ... [and] which exceed what is usual or proper."

An inventory of communication equipment of the regional field unit in Davao showed that it procured 202 mobile phone units from 2000 to 2006 at a cost of P2,139,559.10.

Some of this equipment were either still in the possession of officials and employees who are no longer assigned to the field office or were issued to job order or contractual employees.

This was contrary to an order from Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap in 2004 limiting the issuance of cell phones and prepaid cards to the level of division chiefs only.

"The amount used in the purchase of excess units could have also been used to finance more priority programs of the agency," said the COA report.

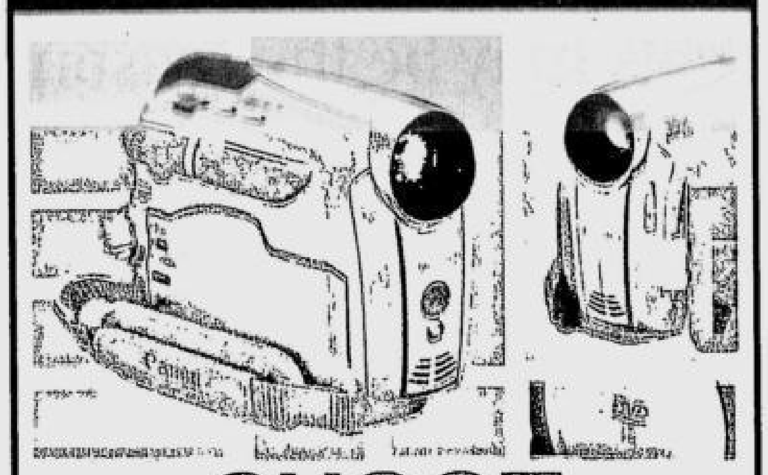
So sorry, solon tells GSIS head

MANILA REP. BIENvenido Abante has apologized to Government Service Insurance System president Winston Garcia for remarks he made against him at the peak of the speakership fight in July, a letter from the congressman to the GSIS showed.

Garcia, as a result, withdrew the libel case he filed against Abante. The congressman had told reporters that Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia, the GSIS head's father, was using GSIS funds to bankroll his bid for the House leadership against eventual winner Speaker Jose de Venecia.

"I reiterate my sincere apology conveyed to you personally for any remarks attributed to me by media that may have offended you or the great institution you represent," said Abante in his letter to Garcia dated Aug. 9, 2007.

Garcia said with Abante's apology "the GSIS has deemed to put closure to the issue by withdrawing the libel case." *Norman Bordadora*



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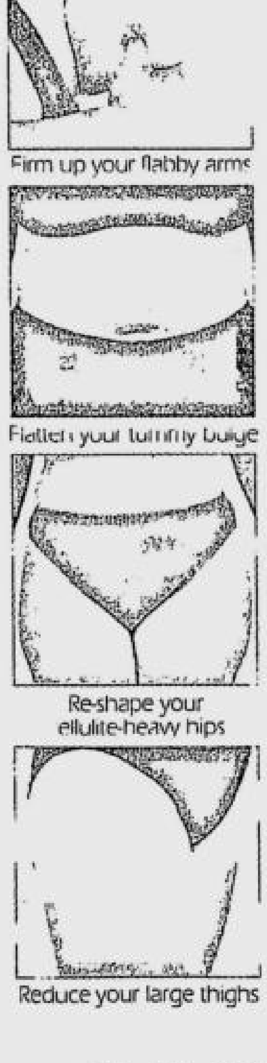

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Abalos name not in BI arrival, departure records for China

By Tarra Quismundo

Though he has admitted going to China three or four times this year, the name of Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. does not appear in the Manila airport's departure and arrival records for mainland China from February to April.

Abalos' name was not on the Bureau of Immigration's list of outbound and returning passengers for Chinese cities during the period, the time when Abalos purportedly flew to China several times to play golf with officials of ZTE Corp., according to airport sources.

ZTE is the Chinese firm that bagged the $329-million national broadband network (NBN) contract.

Departure and arrival records at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminals 1 and 2 did not match Abalos' name to departures for China during the months when the Comelec chief supposedly flew to the country on ZTE's account.

To Hong Kong

Abalos did fly to Hong Kong, but the flight was in mid-April. The NBN contract was signed on April 21 in Boao, China.

Airport sources said Abalos flew to Hong Kong on April 14 and returned to Manila two days later, both via Philippine Airlines, which government officials take for official trips.

Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla claimed that all of Abalos' China trips were "unofficial."

The Comelec chair was also known to have left in late March for a Holy Week trip with his wife to Honolulu, Hawaii, and the cities of Los Angeles and San Francisco in California.

The tour was part of Abalos' mission to encourage US-based Filipinos to cast their votes by mail through absentee voting.

Poll ban on gov't deals may be the reason

By Nikko Dizon

THE GOVERNMENT IS PROHIBITED from entering into contracts during an election period, according to officials of the Commission on Elections.

"There's a general ban on entering into contracts, or anything that can be used in the campaign. There are many prohibitions during the election period that cannot be done without prior approval and consent of the Comelec," a source privy to the inner workings of the Comelec surmised, speaking to the INQUIRER on condition of anonymity.

The government signed a $329-million contract for the national broadband network (NBN) project with Chinese firm ZTE Corp. on April 21, the height of the campaign period for the May 14 national and local elections.

In a separate interview, Comelec Law Department chief, Alioden Dalaig, told the INQUIRER on Tuesday that specifically prohibited under the Omnibus Election Code were public works contracts and projects.

The Comelec issued Resolution 7707 last year, citing the Omnibus Election Code provisions prohibiting the "construction of public works, delivery of materials for public works and issuance of treasury warrants or similar devices for a future undertaking chargeable against public funds" and "releases, disbursements or expenditures of public funds, public works, social services and development" from March 30 to May 14, 2007.

Abalos admits ZTE paid for trips

From page A1

was seen playing golf with ZTE officials in Manila and Shenzen. The opposition lawmaker also alleged that the Comelec chair had received lavish gifts and women from his Chinese hosts.

The NBN contract was signed on April 21 in Boao, China, when the government was prohibited from signing contracts because of the May elections.

At the Wack-Wack Country Club in Mandaluyong City, the embattled Comelec chair told the INQUIRER he and the top officials of ZTE had become friends and golfing buddies.

Abalos daughter

Abalos also said that his daughter Girlie, who runs a company that imports goods from China, was a friend of a ZTE director, who had helped her source her products.

He explained that last year he met the ZTE executives he only knew as "Mr. Yu" and "Mr. Hau," through a mutual friend, who requested him to help the ZTE officials sit down with Philippine government officials over their plans to invest in the Davao Special Economic Zone (DSEZ).

Abalos said that even President Macapagal-Arroyo knew of ZTE's plans in Davao.

He said Yu was a vice president of ZTE, while Hau was the chair. Asked to provide their full names and the date when they were introduced to each other and the other times they met, Abalos said he had forgotten such details.

"They were here to talk about investments. They would like to get an audience with the proper parties. And I think the proper party was Finance Secretary Margarito Teves," Abalos said.

ZTE, a company backed by the Chinese government, plans to develop DSEZ as a base for advanced agricultural and mining product processing and turn it into a logistics hub in Mindanao, according to the copy of its presentation given to Abalos.

The Comelec chair said he was particularly impressed by the firm's plan to plant corn in the economic zone and turn it to fuel.

Meeting at Teves' house

Abalos said he and the ZTE officials met with Teves at the finance secretary's house in Alabang, Muntinlupa, "one afternoon last year."

Asked about Teves' reaction during the meeting, Abalos said, "He was impressed. I think they were referred to Neda [National Economic and Development Authority].

After the meeting, the ZTE executives did not ask any more favors from him, although they mostly talked about golf.

The broadband deal was never a part of their conversation, he said, stressing that he did not help the company get a deal with the government.

"Who am I to do that? This was supposed to be a government-to-government contract. Ambassadors are the ones who should be doing this," Abalos said.

He denied reports that one of his close personnel engineered the deal. He said his aides were not that influential and powerful.

Social visits to China 3 to 4 times

Abalos said the ZTE officials had invited him several times to China because he played host to them when they were in the Philippines.

He said his Chinese golfing buddies financed his trips, which he considered to be "social visits."

Abalos said he went to China "three or four" times since he and the ZTE officials met last year.

The Comelec chair also played host to the Chinese in Manila "four or five" times. The last time they saw each other was "long before the elections," he said.

He said he saw nothing wrong with the visits, as it were all part of the golfing tradition.

He noted that the golfing grounds in China were excellent, describing his excursions there to be like the pilgrimage of a "Muslim going to Mecca."

"I am not denying that I went to China. I am not denying that they footed the bills. I foot their bills when they came here. Golfers are like that," he said, adding that some golfers even throw parties for their visiting counterparts.

'Son of God'

If the House of Representatives summoned him and investigated his trips, Abalos said he would answer their questions. "They might just embarrass themselves," he said.

Abalos, however, took exception to the allegations that his Chinese hosts supplied him with women in Shenzen. He said the stories about him were "all incredible."

Abalos' son, Mandaluyong City Mayor Benhur Abalos, said his father would file libel charges against anyone who names him as the one who had sex with Chinese women.

The House, the mayor said, should investigate the son of Speaker Jose C. de Venecia for questioning the broadband deal.

Jose de Venecia III is an executive of the Amsterdam Holdings Inc., which offered an unsolicited bid for the NBN project but lost.

"Are they afraid that he is the son of the Speaker? Is he the son of God?" the mayor said.

Serious accusation

In the House, Majority Leader Arthur Defensor branded as "serious" Padilla's allegation that Abalos may have brokered the NBN deal.

"This should be looked into," Defensor said.

"In fact, we have referred the privilege speech to the appropriate committee ... The committee on rules will decide which committee would look into the allegations," he said.

Impeachable offense

For his part, Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles, chair of the House contingent to the Commission on Appointments, said Abalos' alleged involvement in the NBN deal may be an impeachable offense if the allegations were supported by evidence.

The opposition is not in a hurry to file an impeachment case against Abalos, saying there is no concrete evidence of his alleged wrongdoing, the House minority leader said.

However, San Juan City Rep. Ronaldo Zamora said the opposition wanted the House committee on good governance to investigate Abalos' trips to China with ZTE officials. ***With a report from Norman Bordadora***

Corrections

IN THE AUG. 24 ISSUE, a front-page story — "Out of shadow of death, emerged the nationalist" — misstated the former law partner of ex-Senate President Jovito Salonga. Salonga's law partner was Dr. Sotero — not Jose — Laurel.

* * *

The same article misstated the year when the dictator Ferdinand Marcos called for a snap presidential election. Marcos called for a snap election in November 1985 — not 1986.

* * *

IN THE AUG. 28 ISSUE, an article on Page A29 of the Sports section — "NCAA, San Beda execs settle row amicably" — misspelled the surname of the president of Mapua Institute of Technology. His name is Rey Vea — not Veya.

* * *

IN THE AUG. 29 ISSUE, the front-page banner story — "Joma Sison arrested" — misstated the year when communist leader Jose Ma. Sison started his self-exile in Utrecht, The Netherlands. The same mistake appeared in a front-page story in the Aug. 30 issue — "Kintanar widow: I can fly to The Hague to testify." Sison applied for political asylum in The Netherlands in October 1988.

* * *

IN THE AUG. 30 ISSUE, a front-page article — "Bishops fail to heal split of 2 'Couples'" — misstated the name of the Couples for Christ splinter group. The group led by Frank Padilla is named Couples For Christ Foundation for Family and Life — not Couples for Christ for Family and Life.

* * *

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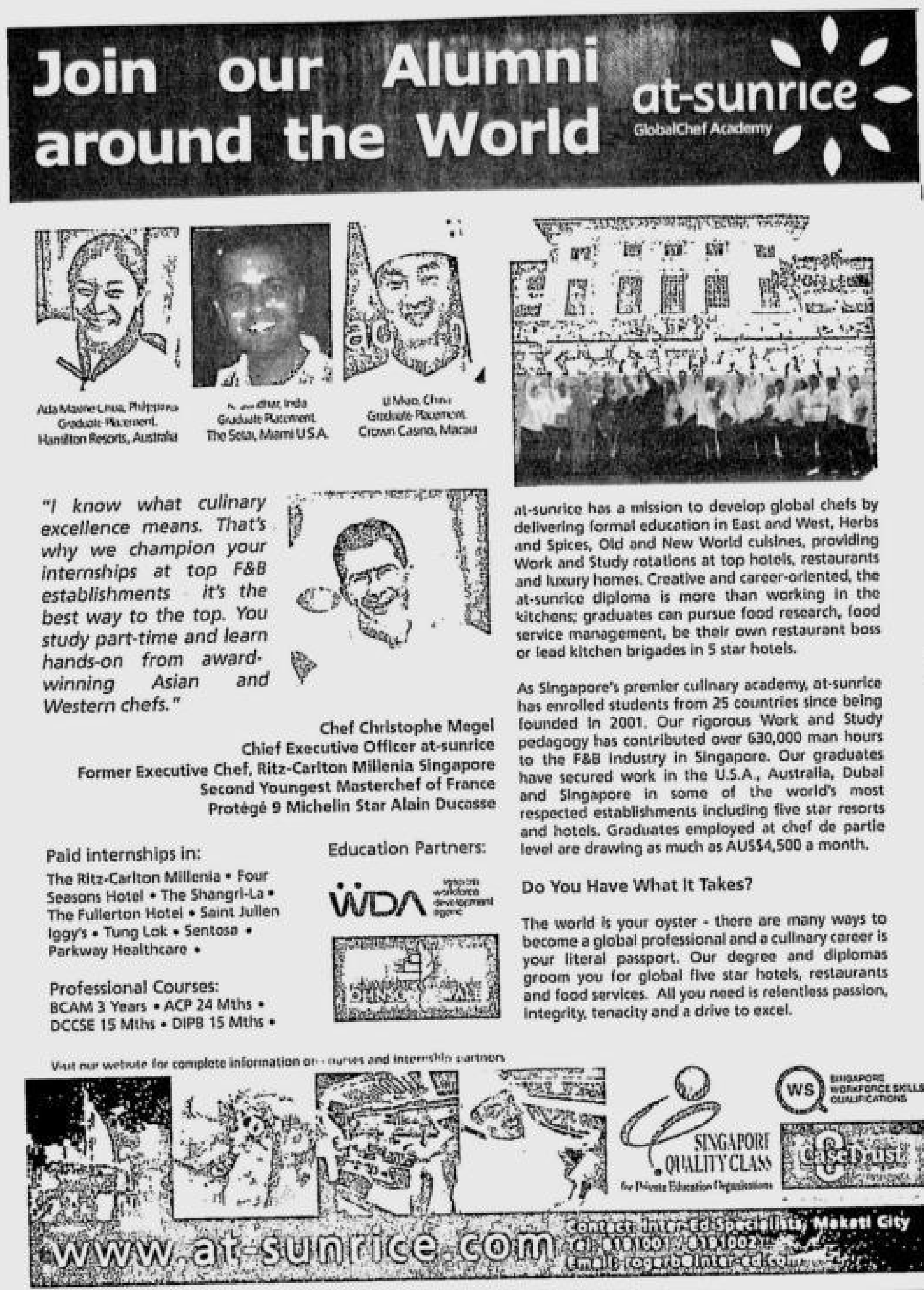

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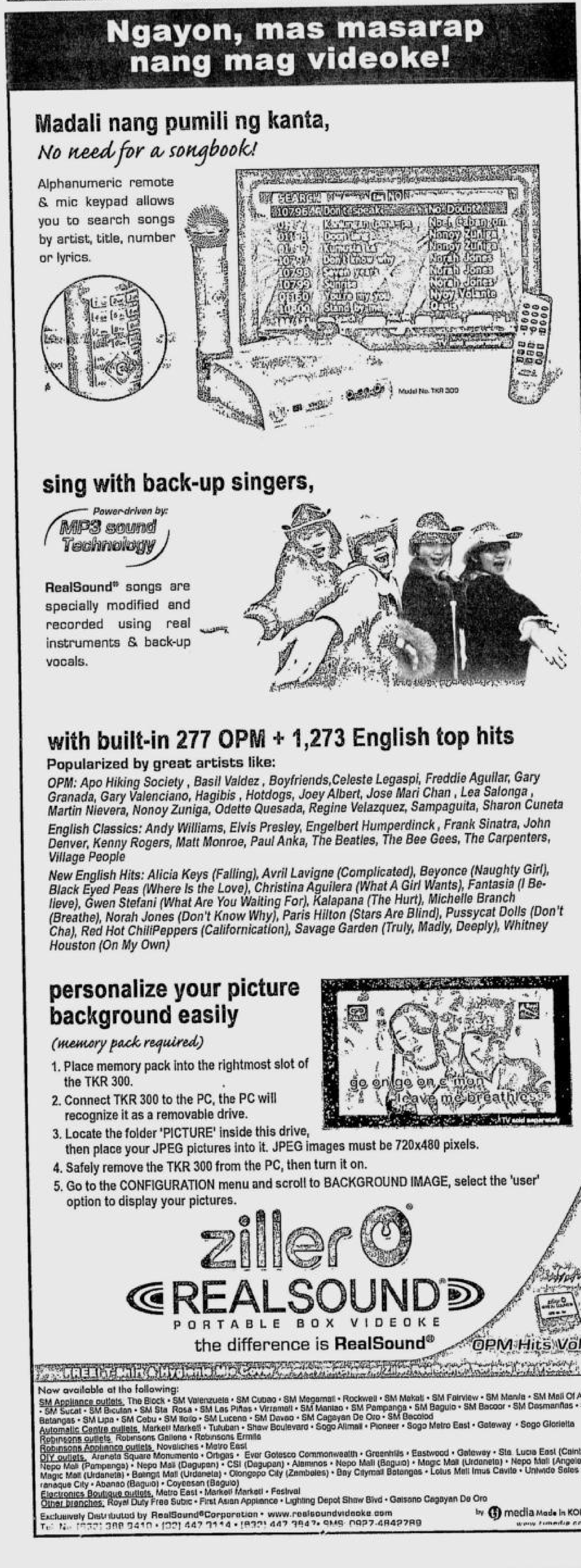

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Hospitals to go ahead with 'holiday'

By Nikko Dizon

PRIVATE HOSPITALS WILL HOLD A "HOLIday" starting next month to convey their disappointment over the supposed failure of the government to come up with measures that would also protect them from bankruptcy in light of a law preventing them from detaining patients for unpaid bills.

The spokesperson of the Private Hospitals Association of the Philippines (PHAP) said yesterday the group's member hospitals plan to hold a regular boycott until 2008, if the government fails to come up with a reasonable implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for Republic Act No. 9439, or even repeal it.

"The [PHAP] board saw that the dialogues with government have lead nowhere. There were no positive action to protect the hospitals. In the IRR, there is no protection for the hospitals from patients' non-payment of bills," Dr. Rustico Jimenez, PHAP spokesperson, told the INQUIRER by phone.

The PHAP was supposed to hold a hospital holiday last May but deferred it after the health department invited the group to help in the formulation of the IRR.

Jimenez said that PHAP has yet to decide on the date of the first holiday and how often in a month would this be implemented.

Jimenez, however, gave the assurance that hospitals would attend to emergency cases, such as birth deliveries and accidents, even if they are on "holiday."

GMA reneged on promise to raise Mindanao budget, solons lament

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE 59-MEMBER MINDANAO bloc in the House of Representatives yesterday questioned the sincerity of Arroyo administration to end the decades-old conflict in the region through concrete, social development projects.

The Mindanao lawmakers raised the matter following a meeting with Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap over President Macapagal-Arroyo's promise to increase by 30 percent the budget of three key departments for the region.

In the meeting held Wednesday night at a Quezon City hotel, Yap reportedly broke the bad news that the Department of Agriculture could not contribute its share in the planned budget increase.

"We were disappointed because the President had already given her word, yet her Cabinet secretary is unable to implement the increase," Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez told the INQUIRER.

Rodriguez said the 45 lawmakers who had shown up in the meeting were even more disappointed over Yap's supposedly failure to give "clear reasons" behind his department's failure to deliver.

The Mindanao lawmakers were apparently counting on Ms Arroyo's promise in her State of the Nation Address that the Departments of Agriculture, Agrarian Reform, and Environment and Natural Resources would each devote more funds for the region next year.

Rodriguez said the agriculture secretary explained that "other regions had to be attended to, as well."

Not satisfied with the reason, Rodriguez said he and his fellow lawmakers "grilled" Yap if only to express the urgency of putting more money for Mindanao development programs.

"The 30-percent increase in the budget is meant to cure the decades of neglect being experienced by our people in Mindanao," he said.

Rodriguez said the Mindanao bloc was not amenable to the idea of the agriculture department supposedly concentrating on rice production. He said the argument was for the government to equally explore "high-value crops."

One lawmaker, he said, aired the problem of the missing budget for irrigation in his district.

Another lawmaker complained that the government was yet to act on his request for around 50 carabaos for dairy purposes, according to Rodriguez.

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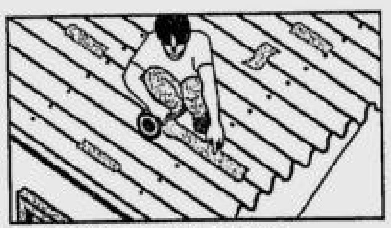
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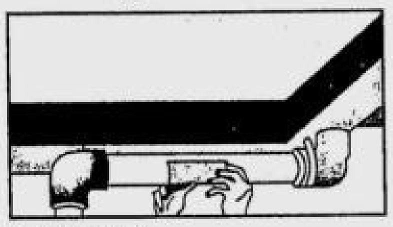
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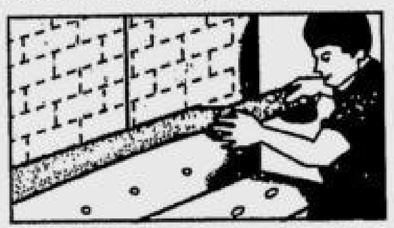
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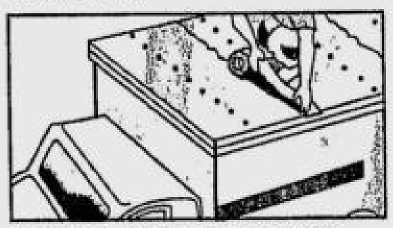
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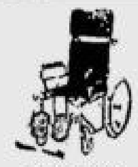
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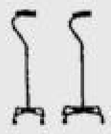
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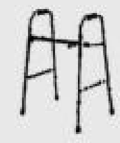
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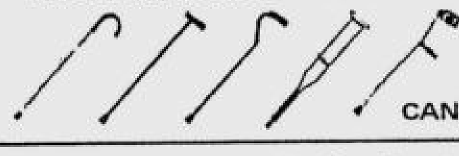
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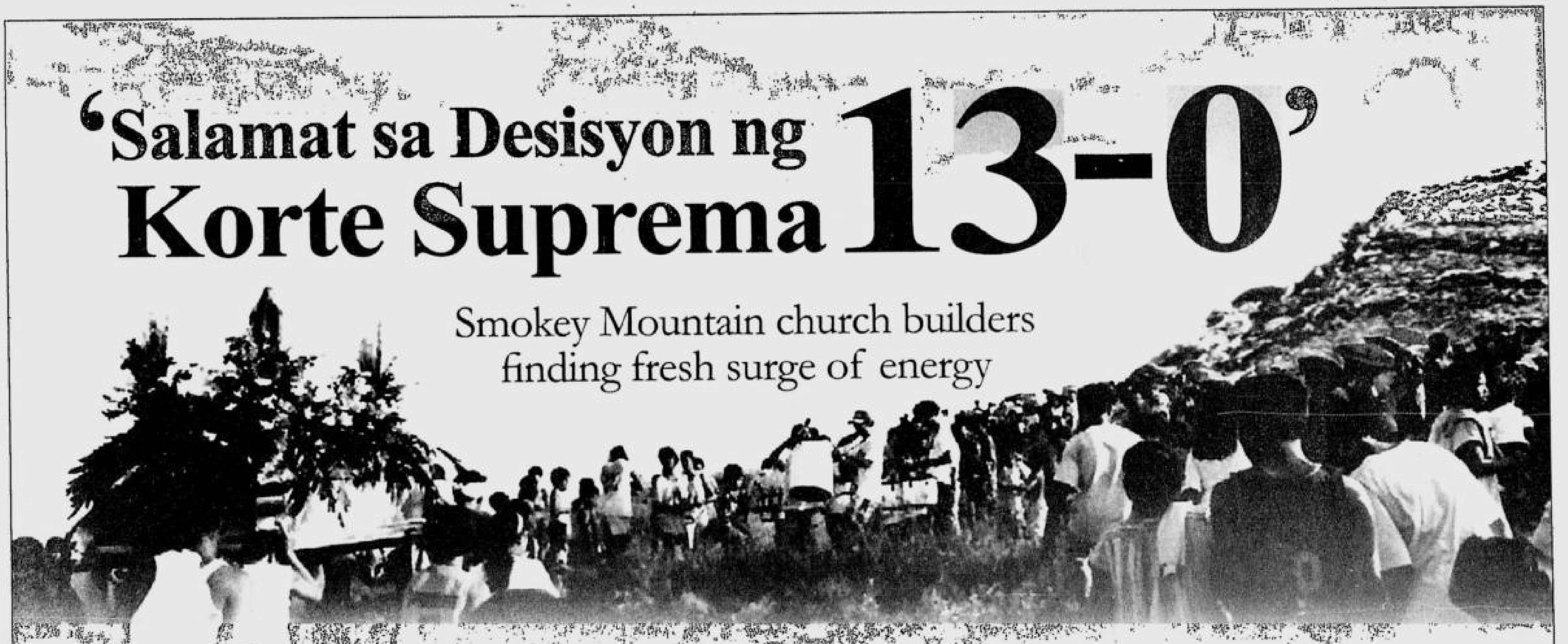

'Salamat sa Desisyon ng Korte Suprema 13-0'

Smokey Mountain church builders finding fresh surge of energy

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It's a continuing story of strife and joy, of struggle and relief. But underlying this unfolding work to build the world's first "green" church is persistence of faith.

The Parish of the Resurrected Christ in Tondo, Manila, which covers the community of former dwellers and scavengers of the once huge Smokey Mountain garbage mound, is making a mark for the world to behold.

This work now progresses with renewed vigor, coming on the heels of the recent 13-0 decision of the Supreme Court that upholds the validity of the **Smokey Mountain Reclamation and Development Project** undertaken by the **National Housing Authority** and the **R-II Builders Inc.**

The parish, under the leadership of Father Ben Beltran, SVD, started building last year a new church called the **Church of Hope**. With environment--friendly features, the church embodies the lessons of the community's past on the value of care of the environment. The edifice, designed by a well--respected architecture and design company, will also house high-tech ventures that will teach and employ the youth on e-trading activities.

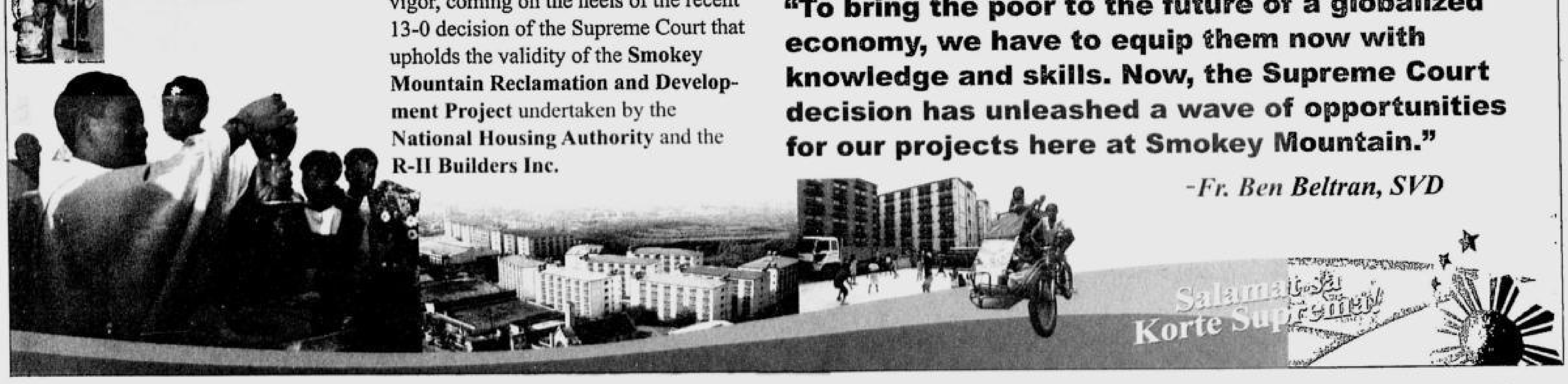
Once, this community held Holy Mass and a procession on the garbage mound to seal closure, and now, with the Church of Hope, it looks forward to more offerings of the Holy Mass for continued blessings.

To quote the words of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, upon witnessing then the Smokey Mountain dwellers' transfer to their new shelter, **"It is a miracle."**

(Updates on the Parish projects are at www.prcsmokey-mt.org.)

"To bring the poor to the future of a globalized economy, we have to equip them now with knowledge and skills. Now, the Supreme Court decision has unleashed a wave of opportunities for our projects here at Smokey Mountain."

-Fr. Ben Beltran, SVD



Aussie firm told to stop mining exploration in Vizcaya

TO AVERT FRESH VIOLENCE, Environment Secretary Joselito Atienza yesterday ordered an Australian mining firm to stop hauling equipment to its mining exploration site in Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya.

Scores of tribal folks were hurt Wednesday afternoon after clashing with paramilitary forces who tried to transport heavy equipment past their barricade to the Oxiana Philippines Inc. site.

The paramilitary forces were employed by Oxiana.

"We are calling for a moratorium, a status quo. Let's not rush into things," Atienza told reporters. "Let's hold it, talk things out."

The secretary also called the Oxiana executives to a dialogue today to discuss the tribal folks' concerns against the mining project, and draw up ways to address these.

"We will admonish them to address the local concerns. It looks like there has been an absence in communication and community relations," he said. "Concern for the degradation of the environment must be clearly answered by the corporation."

Tension had been building up in the upland town after the tribal folk barricaded the road leading to the Oxiana Philippines Inc.'s exploration site in Pao Village.

The mining firm, which is exploring gold and copper in the area, has secured a temporary restraining order from the local courts against the barricade.

The villagers, on the other hand, should be open to a dialogue with the mining executives, and be apprised of the benefits of the project, Atienza said

"The local community leaders must understand what's happening, what are the benefits of hosting a mining operation, and what can they do against the resulting damage to the environment," he said.

"There have to be assurances in the process so that they'll be more appreciative of the immediate benefits."

Atienza praised Nueva Vizcaya Gov. Luisa Lloren Cuaresma for initiating a dialogue between the tribal folks and the mining firm.

"I'm happy because the governor is calling for a meeting. She's mediating, that's good," he said.

TJ Burgonio

Boy to get new liver

AN ALL-FILIPINO MEDICAL TEAM IS SET to perform a pediatric liver transplant next month at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) on a four-and-a-half year old boy suffering from a liver called biliary atresia.

The operation will cost P2 million to be shouldered by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), an attached agency of the Department of Health (DOH).

The PCSO has also earmarked another P2 million for another pediatric liver transplant.

Australia-trained pediatric surgeon Dr. Leandro Resurreccion III will head the team of 30 doctors from three different medical departments (surgery, pediatrics, and medicine).

The turnover of PCSO funds for the projects was held yesterday at the PGH. In attendance were Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, PCSO chair Sergio Valencia, PGH Director Dr. Carmelo Alfiler, and some members of the transplant team, led by Resurreccion.

The boy, who's identity was kept confidential, suffers from biliary atresia, described in a US medical website as "a chronic, progressive liver problem that becomes evident shortly after birth."

It is a condition wherein the bile ducts of the liver are blocked, damaging the organ and affecting other vital body functions.

Resurreccion said that one of the boy's parents is the donor.

Nikko Dizon

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, August 31, 2007
21st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Thes 4:1-8
Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

Jesus told his disciples this parable: "This story throws light on what will happen in the kingdom of heaven. Ten bridesmaids went out with their lamps to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were careless while the others were sensible.

"The careless bridesmaids took their lamps as they were and did not bring extra oil. But those who were sensible, brought with their lamps flasks of oil. As the bridegroom delayed, they all grew drowsy and fell asleep.

"But at midnight, a cry rang out: 'The bridegroom is here, come out and meet him!' All the maidens woke up at once and trimmed their lamps. Then the careless ones said to the sensible ones: 'Give us some oil, for our lamps are going out.' The sensible ones answered: 'There may not be enough for both you and us. You had better go to those who sell and buy for yourselves.'

"They were out buying oil when the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him to the wedding feast, and the doors were shut.

"Later the rest of the bridesmaids arrived and called out: 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But he answered: 'Truly, I do not know you.'

"So, stay awake, for you do not know the day nor the hour."

Commentary

We must always make great progress, in instruction and in practice, so that we may grow in holiness. We are to be careful in all we say and do, and in how we treat one another in the grace of the Spirit. This is the Word of the Lord calling us back always to imitation of Jesus and obedience to the Word of the gospel.

Jesus tells us the story of the 10 bridesmaids awaiting the coming of the groom, some with flasks and oil in their lamps and others with none. Flasks of oil—the anointing and gift of the Spirit given to us in baptism/confirmation for the life of the people at the wedding feast of the Lord. Have we used up our oil or do we keep our lamps lit and our minds and lives attentive to the Spirit of God. Are we so wrapped up in ourselves that we are forgetful of what has been given to us and our place in the community awaiting God's coming to us?

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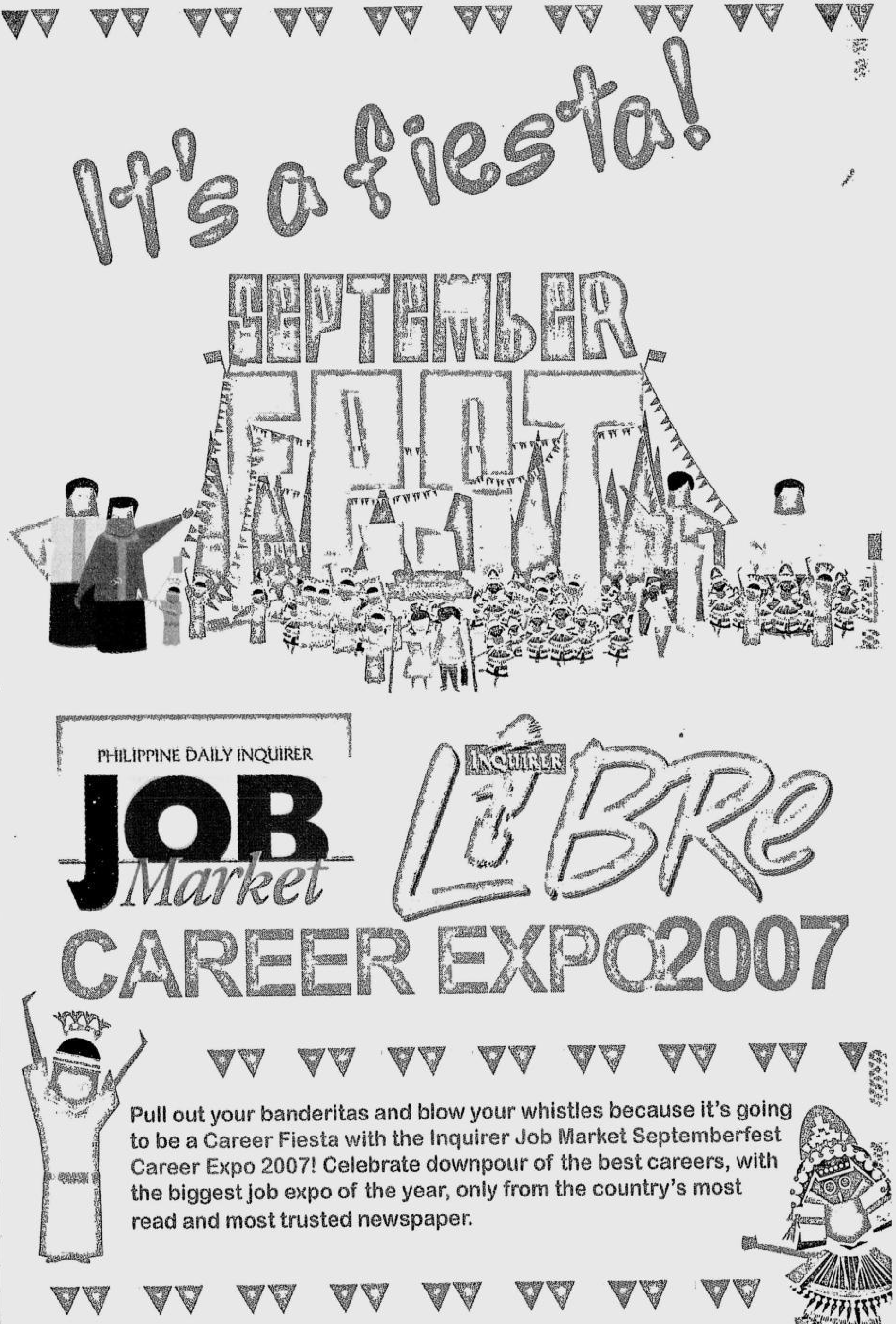

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'Walis tingting' sweeps 'Tsong' to jail for 50 years

From page A1

The court rejected the defense argument of Marquez that his "noble" quest to win the title of "Cleanest and Greenest City" constituted an "emergency" justifying his noncompliance with the rules and regulations of the Commission on Audit.

Marquez appeared distraught and refused to talk with newsmen after the Sandiganbayan found him and three former officials of Parañaque City guilty of five counts of graft in connection with the anomalous purchase of 55,431 broomsticks worth P1.07 between January 1996 and September 1997.

The antigraft court's fourth division sentenced Marquez to six to 10 years in prison for each count of graft (a jail term ranging from 30 to 50 years) and ordered him to pay P462,708 representing the overpriced amount in the procurement of the broomsticks.

Also convicted of graft were three Parañaque City officials in the broomstick controversy—Silvestre de Leon, the city treasurer; Marilou Tanael, the city accountant, and Ofelia Caunan, officer in charge of the city's general services office. De Leon passed away recently, according to the Sandiganbayan sheriff.

MARQUEZ

The court, however, cleared three other accused for lack of evidence—Flocerfida Babida, city budget officer; Ailyn Romea, chief of staff of the Office of the Mayor; and Antonio Razo, a private respondent.

Throughout the promulgation, which lasted only a few minutes, Marquez kept his composure but one of his fellow accused burst into tears when the court announced the guilty verdict.

No public bidding

"A perusal of the prosecution's evidence would readily reveal, even from a layman's perspective, that the local government of Parañaque was seriously prejudiced by the transactions under review," Associate Justice Jose Hernandez said in his 30-page decision.

The court said Marquez and the other accused should have conducted a public bidding so the city government could have gotten the best possible price for the broomsticks.

Court records showed that the city government procured 55,432 broomsticks without public bidding from Zaro Trading, a firm owned by Razo.

As part of its "Clean and Green" program, the city government purchased by personal canvass a total 142,612 broomsticks worth more than P2.95 million through the committee on bids and awards from 1996 to 1998.

Above reasonable price of P11

The Commission on Audit found out that these broomsticks were bought at either P15 or P25 each—way above the "reasonable price" of P11 per broomstick quoted by the Department of Budget and Management Procurement Service and obtained by the Las Piñas government from various suppliers.

The court noted that all the broomsticks were "supplied by one supplier, all purchases were attended with irregularities, each purchase of *walis tingting* is a part of one whole transaction and the other [broomsticks] were overpriced by the same supplier at P14 per piece."

"This court is convinced that the transactions entered into by Parañaque City relative to the walis tingting with handle are manifestly and grossly disadvantageous to the government," Hernandez said in his ruling.

In convicting Marquez, the court said it was "fairly evident that he had a hand in each and every step of the transaction" as he had signed the documents pertinent to the procurement of the broomsticks.

The court pointed out that Marquez even approved a purchase request without the signature of the city treasurer regarding the funds available and signed resolutions invoking a repealed law to sidestep public bidding.

Camera-shy

After the promulgation, Marquez and the others holed themselves up at the Sandiganbayan sheriff's office for more than three hours, refusing to talk with the media.

At one point, a distraught Marquez was seen lounging on a sofa while engaging Sheriff Ed Urieta in light talk. He also allowed a trainee working in the sheriff's office to take his picture.

The comedian left past 1 p.m. on board his black Ford Expedition when the court issued his release order upon settlement of P150,000 additional cash bond for his temporary liberty.

2 other graft cases

Marquez has 15 days to file a motion for reconsideration.

The actor has two other graft cases pending in the Sandiganbayan—the alleged overprice in the purchase of P3.2 million worth of ammunition for his bodyguards; and his failure to reimburse P6.4 million worth of textbooks that the Parañaque government ordered from a supplier.

Joey vs Willie ...

From page A1

of Filipino viewers of noon-time variety shows.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II, chair of the committee on trade and commerce, told reporters that he would file a resolution seeking an immediate investigation of alleged manipulation of the P2-million "Wilyonaryo" game portion of ABS-CBN's "Wowoweee" program by its host Willie Revillame.

DE LEON: The subject is joking

REVILLAME: The subject is nasty

Senators Ramon Revilla Jr., chair of the committee on mass media and public information, and Lito Lapid, chair of the committee on games and amusement, are also considering an inquiry into the controversy that has cast doubt on the integrity of TV game shows promising millions of pesos to viewers.

The senators' remarks came just an hour after host-comedian Joey de Leon of the rival show "Eat Bulaga" on GMA 7 made a fervent appeal to lawmakers. Or was it a joke? One never knows with Joey de Leon.

"Kaya kayong mga nandyan sa Senado, iwan nyo na yang 'Hello Garci,' patulan nyo na itong 'Hello Papi' (So you people in the Senate, abandon the 'Hello Garci' scandal and confront this 'Hello, Papi')," said De Leon in joking (?) reference to Revillame's pet name.

The Hello Garci issue involves wiretapped conversations allegedly between then Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano and President Macapagal-Arroyo that indicated she stole the 2004 elections. Ms Arroyo has denied the accusation.

Root of controversy

"This is serious, this is for the audience. There are really hosts who are conniving in these kind of things especially when money is involved," De Leon said of his appeal.

The scandal involved "Wowowee's" Aug. 20 episode which showed Revillame bungling his presentation of the key number "2" to indicate that the contestant had not picked the jackpot offer of P2 million, but instead showed a "0." He was caught on camera holding two sets of numbers.

That episode, which was placed on Youtube.com, has been the subject of nasty commentaries in newspapers, tabloids, radio and TV shows, and Internet blogs.

'Honest mistake'

ABS-CBN released a statement more than a week later, explaining the incident as an "honest mistake."

"The revelation of where the P2-million jackpot prize is happened after the contestant decided to get Willie's offer. Since 'Wilyonaryo' is a new game, a mechanical glitch occurred in the reveal portion," it said.

Over the last two days, De Leon and Revillame, colleagues-turned-bitter rivals, have traded barbs against each other.

On Wednesday, Revillame denied in between sobs that he cheated on his show and expressed displeasure over De Leon's taunts on "Eat Bulaga."

"You shouldn't do this, Joey. I idolize you. *Sa 'yo na ang ratings. Akala mo kung sino kang malinis* (You can have the ratings. You'd think he's clean)," said Revillame.

De Leon did not let the blistering words pass. He gave a rare interview on GMA 7's radio station dzBB yesterday, calling Revillame a "know-nothing" and "shallow" for failing to explain the incident.

'Know nothing'

He said he never mentioned Revillame or his show by name and dared Revillame to sue him. "The main question in this issue is why did they have two numbers in the tire? He should answer that, the issue is not about me," he said, referring to "Wowowee's" game.

Later in the afternoon, at "Eat Bulaga," De Leon maintained that he did not start the fight but just commented on what he had read and heard from media since the video segment became a bigger hit than any "sex scandal" video.

Explain before complaining

De Leon, who did not allude to Revillame by name throughout his tirade, urged his rival to "explain first before complaining" instead of blaming other people for his fault. Both of their shows, De Leon said, were looked up to by millions of Filipinos.

He mocked Revillame for "crying without tears."

"It's very easy to cry, just slice some onions. Don't poke your eye with your finger, you might cry blood," he said.

Revillame responded later in his show that he did not have to explain anything, that the Senate need not bother to look into the incident, and that people continued to support him.

In calling for an investigation, Roxas, who is romantically linked to ABS-CBN news anchor Korina Sanchez, said: "We have to uphold the integrity of TV game shows especially since millions of Filipinos look up to them, particularly their jackpot prizes of as much as P2 million, as their ticket out of poverty."

Consumer Welfare Code

In a statement, the senator said: "We will look into this by first asking the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry) what are the complaints, who are the complainants, and what it has done and intends to do about this matter. Based on this information, we shall file an appropriate resolution for a Senate inquiry with the end-goal of strengthening our Consumer Welfare Code."

For his part, Revilla, a talent of GMA, said: "Let us not be quick to judge. Let us wait for a formal complaint to be filed at the DTI, which is the agency tasked with handling this matter. But I will support any investigation of the issue. If it will be referred to my committee, I will certainly act on it but I do not see any reason to initiate such an action at this stage."

Waiting for report

Lapid's spokesperson said the former actor was just waiting for the report from the DTI and the MTRCB (Movie and Television Review and Classification Board) before filing his resolution. Lapid had earlier cautioned Revillame and other TV game shows to be more careful and transparent in their programs, he said.

WINSTON IN CONCERT
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Winston would like to inform its loyal followers that the concert in Greenhills on Aug. 31 has been moved to Sept. 28. It will be held in Eastwood Central Plaza and will feature hot bands Bamboo, Kjwan and Sino Sikat?

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AM-EL-22	House and lot (TCT T-229490)	50.00	Lot 45 BLk. 8, Sta. Monica Homes, Sitio Wiswis, Camaya, Mariveles	P 139,900.00
BATANGAS				
AM-MC-23	House and lot (TCT T-89539)	325.00	220 Liza Compound, Pob. 14, San Roque, Sto. Tomas	P 684,600.00
BULACAN				
AM-RT-25	Vacant residential lot (TCT T-121757)	500.00	Lambakin, Marilao	P 1,115,800.00
CAVITE				
AM-MC-26A	Vacant residential lot (TCT T-899528)	216.00	Lot 13 Blk. 7 Cherry St., Greenfield Subd., Bo. Silangan, Rosario	P 324,000.00
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AM-FD-27	House and lot (TCT T-1101806)	32.00	Lot 6 Blk. 11 Philhomes Ville I Subd., Toclong, Kawit	P 103,900.00
AM-RP-28	House and lot (TCT T-369067)	768.00	Bo. Sinaliw, Alfonso	P 200,000.00
CEBU				
AM-RT-29	House and lot (TD No. 16387)	449.00	Poblacion, Compostela	P 569,600.00
DAVAO				
AM-RT-30	3-contiguous residential lots (TCT Nos. T-369591, T-369590 & T-369589) with bldg. & imp.	2,235.00	Tacunan Road, Catalunan Grande, Davao City	P 3,126,800.00
AM-RT-31B	Vacant residential lot (TCT No. 347765)	1,146.00	Calamba St., San Pedro Village, Buhangin, Davao City	P 1,890,900.00
AM-RT-32A	House and lot (TCT No. T-193659)	595.00	Mirafuentes Subdivision, Tagum City	P 368,700.00
AM-RT-32B	2-parcels of agro-residential lot (TCT Nos. T-131865 & T-131866)	15,532.00	Sitio Bilo, Bo. San Vicente, Panabo City	P 503,300.00
AM-RT-33A	Residential lot (TCT No. T-190125) with bldg. & imp.	2,791.00	No. 40 Purok Galingan, Mankilam Road, Tagum City	P 2,564,400.00
GENERAL SANTOS				
AM-RT-34	Vacant residential lot (TCT T-99815)	10,000.00	Bo. Tambler, General Santos City	P 3,700,000.00
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AM-RT-36	House and lot (TCT T-470006)	80.00	Lot 6 Blk. 15, St. Joseph Village 4, Butong, Cabuyao	P 353,300.00
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AM-MC-37	Vacant residential lot (TCT NT-291877)	300.00	Magno Subd., Sto. Cristo, San Isidro	P 114,900.00
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ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI-August 31, 2007)

Asean free-trade talks with Australia, NZ extended

SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES, Australia and New Zealand have extended the deadline for concluding their free-trade negotiations to May and hope to sign an accord next year, an official said Thursday.

The free-trade talks between the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the agricultural powerhouses have run into some rough spots, with Malaysia reportedly complaining the two countries were insisting on including contentious issues that could stall the negotiations.

Both sides initially looked at concluding the negotiations this year, but Australian Ambassador to the Philippines Tony Hely said the deadline has been extended to May.

A deal could be signed next August during the meeting of Asean economic ministers. *AP*

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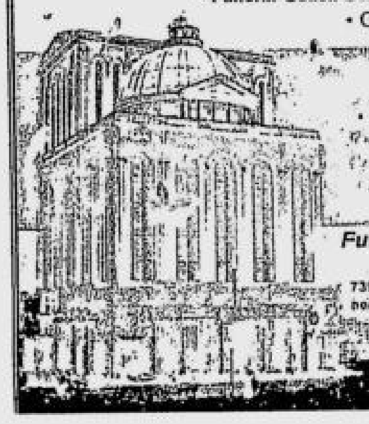

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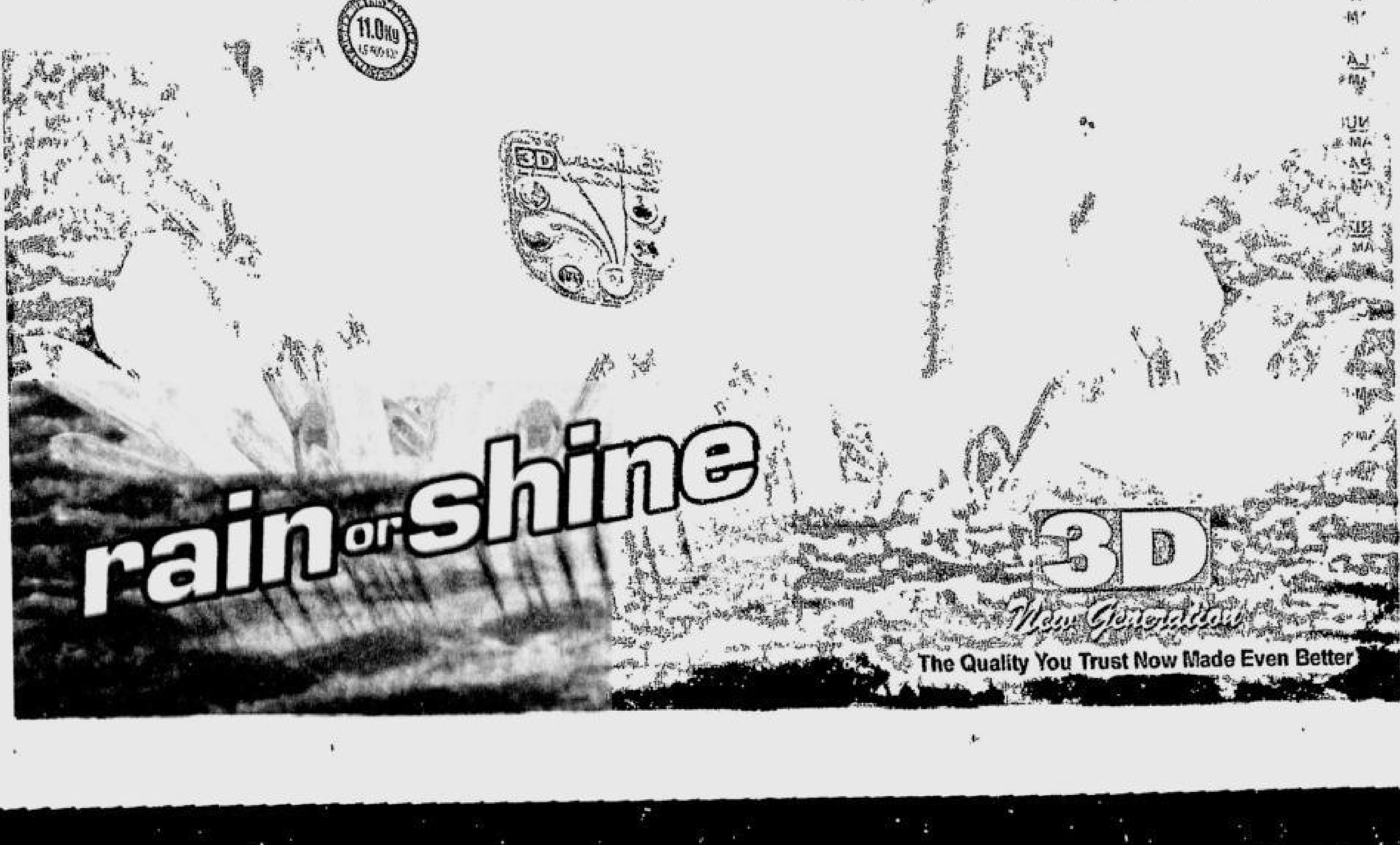

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Surprise! 7.5% growth; Q2 figure highest in 20 years

TOP BRASS see off their Commander in Chief who's off to Malaysia. From left, Navy Vice Commander Rear Admiral Amable Tolentino; Army chief Alexander Yano; Air Force chief Horacio Tolentino and PNP chief Oscar Calderon. AP

From page A1

Ms Arroyo said the full-year growth forecast of 6.1 percent to 6.7 percent was on track.

Difficult to sustain

But analysts said it would be difficult to sustain the back-to-back 7-percent-plus annual growth seen in the first two quarters.

"The global credit market squeeze and softness seen in the United States could culminate in slower global demand. So, from the investment point of view, things will slow down," said Vishnu Varathan, an economist at Forecast Pte. Ltd.

"So will exports, as demand for items like electronics take a hit. This, of course, will weigh on the domestic economy, which is to some extent still reliant on exports," he said.

Estrella V. Domingo, acting NSCB secretary general, attributed the economy's strong performance to "continued favorable economic conditions such as stable interest rates and strong peso, resilient agriculture sector, vibrant industry and services sectors, plus election-related spending and intensified infrastructure investments."

Service posted highest growth

Augusto Santos, acting socioeconomic planning secretary, said the country could not afford to be complacent.

"We have to continually raise the bar to ensure the economy's solid growth, so that economic gains increasingly benefit the Filipino people," Santos said at the same press conference.

Data from the NSCB showed that of the three major sectors, services posted the highest growth at 8.4 percent in the second quarter, better than the 6.7 percent in the same period last year.

The strong performance of the services sector was partly attributed to the booming business process outsourcing industry, which includes call centers.

Mining, construction boom

The industry sector also performed strongly, growing by an annual rate of 8 percent in the second quarter, better than the 4.5 percent recorded a year ago. This was largely due to the 33-percent growth of the mining and quarrying subsector, and the 21-percent growth of the construction industry.

Philip Romualdez, president of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, said the mining sector's strong growth was just the beginning.

Agri slowdown

The sector expects $1.5 billion in investments next year, up from an estimated $500 million this year, according to Romualdez.

Due to unfavorable weather, the agriculture, fisheries and forestry (AFF) sector registered minimal growth. AFF grew 3.9 percent, slightly up from the 3.8 percent in the second quarter last year.

Almost all subsectors of agriculture posted a slowdown, including *palay*, corn, coconut, banana, sugarcane, livestock and poultry.

Bad weather remained a risk in the second half, according to Santos. But he said its ill-effects were expected to be offset by the positive performance of the services and industry sectors.

Infra spending

A higher budget allotment for infrastructure spending this year helped pump-prime the economy, the President said.

NSCB data showed that public construction, which takes into account government spending on infrastructure, grew 39.6 percent from a growth of only 11.8 percent in the same quarter last year.

Infrastructure investments from the private sector also improved, registering a year-on-year growth of 2.5 percent, reversing the 4-percent contraction a year ago.

Consumer spending

Consumer spending increased 6.0 percent in the second quarter from 5.4 percent a year ago, boosted by the upsurge in remittances from OFWs.

Domingo said expenses for fuel, light and water rebounded and grew 6.0 percent from negative 2.2 percent in 2006.

Other expenditure items that recorded higher growths during the quarter were: beverages, up 4.8 percent from negative 1.8 percent; clothing and footwear, up 5.6 percent from 1.6 percent; and miscellaneous expenses, up 6.1 percent from 3.8 percent. Food, which accounted for 52.7 percent of total personal consumption expenditure, maintained its growth of 6.4 percent.

Merchandise exports slow

Domingo said total merchandise exports grew 5.9 percent from 21.7 percent last year.

Merchandise imports contracted 12.3 percent, a reversal from the 4.1-percent growth the previous year.

The economic growth will help government achieve its revenue collection target for the year because higher income means higher tax collection, according to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves.

Teves said it was necessary to meet the government's revenue goal so that it could further pump-prime the economy.

In a statement, he said more revenues to fund social services could help ensure that the benefits of higher growth would trickle down to the poor.

The higher-than-expected economic growth of 7.5 percent in the second quarter, along with a benign inflation environment, would support a steady monetary setting in the country, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said. *With reports from Doris C. Dumlao, AP and Reuters*

Challenged by journalist, GMA on verge of flaring up

From page A1

PRESIDENT ARROYO boards a PAL plane for Malaysia to join festivities marking the 50th year of the country's independence. She also wants to thank her hosts for continuing to broker the peace between the government and the MILF. LYN RILLON

television was a remark from a Manila Shimbun reporter that the high economic growth seemed "incredible" and "surprising."

"Are you saying that our statistics ... the NSCB (National Statistical Coordination Board) people are liars?" Ms Arroyo snapped back.

Pointing out the massive infrastructure development all over the country, she asked: "*Totoo ba yun* (Is that true)? You can't see it? And that's (what's) turning the growth."

To back up her claim, Ms Arroyo turned to Philip Romualdez, president of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines. Romualdez and heads of various business chambers were invited to the press conference in Malacañang.

"And also they're asking where the growth is coming from? Mining. So, Philip, can you please tell them that the statistics are not lying about the mining sector?" the President said.

Romualdez seemed taken aback but promptly congratulated Ms Arroyo for the impressive growth rate, saying mining and quarrying have made significant economic contributions.

"This year, we expect $500 million spent in our sector. Export growth has been doubling from last year to this year. So we expect another billion and a half dollars in new investments next year," he said.

He said the mining sector expected "a sustained growth in our sector ... because we have a 6-10 multiplier effect for our industries."

Construction real driver

Other government officials rushed to Ms Arroyo's aid.

Acting Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos admitted that expenditures related to the May elections may have been a factor in the robust second-quarter growth, but pointed out the "uptick in public construction" was the real driver of growth.

In response to a remark by another reporter that economic growth was not trickling down to the grass roots, Ms Arroyo said: "Well, that's what we're working on in the next three years."

She reminded her critics of what her administration has done for the people—one-fourth of the populace already have PhilHealth insurance and enjoy cheaper medicines, the low unemployment rate, more low-cost housing and a decrease in self-rated poverty.

Trickle down

"So there's spending much on medical care than before. This certainly is a trickle-down effect. And then the housing, the housing, we have built more low-cost housing in our administration than any other. These are the trickle down," Ms Arroyo said.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap also pitched in, citing the Arroyo administration's irrigation projects. That trickled down to more than 100,000 farmers, he said.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves boasted that proceeds from the expanded value-added tax funded P12 billion worth of infrastructure projects and P11 billion worth of social services.

"Ours is the only administration that has not experienced any negative growth rate in any quarter. And it's been a six-year administration," Ms Arroyo said, eliciting applause from businessmen.

She said it was Albay Gov. Joey Salceda who, as head of the Presidential Management Staff, told her that a 7-9 percent growth rate for the next three years was achievable.

Ms Arroyo said she saw no reason now why economic growth could not be sustained.

Unconvinced

Despite the President's explanations, certain quarters remain unconvinced.

Cayetano Paderanga, University of the Philippines economics professor and socioeconomic planning secretary during the Aquino administration, said in a television interview that the growth rate was "surprising in the sense that it exceeded most expectations about what the growth would be in the second quarter."

Paderanga said the data needed closer scrutiny, citing the "rather high" agricultural growth being reported and the expansion in manufacturing that came at a time when exports were down due to the strong peso.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he didn't know where the President was coming from. "Poverty is still at a very high level ... So I don't know her basis for saying the economy is improving."

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GMA off to Malaysia with entourage of 52

By Tarra Quismundo

WITH AN ENTOURAGE OF SEVERAL LAWmakers, President Macapagal-Arroyo left Manila yesterday to attend independence day rites in neighboring Malaysia, which marks it's 50th year of sovereignty this year.

Ms Arroyo and 52 other passengers, including government officials and security personnel, boarded a chartered Philippine Airlines flight at 1:50 p.m. via the Villamor Air Base's Kalayaan Hall, a special terminal for VIPs.

The Philippine Air Force Honor Guards lined the red carpet as traditional departure honors were given Ms Arroyo, with Vice President Noli de Castro, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, airport officials, and the military and police top brass at hand.

Ms Arroyo waved to her officials and the media as she carefully ascended the stairs of the waiting aircraft.

Ms Arroyo's two-day trip to Kuala Lumpur is said to be a purely social visit.

She is expected to meet with the Filipino community upon arrival in the city, then grace Malaysian Independence Day events the next day.

Ms Arroyo is due back in Manila before dawn on Saturday.

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RP sailor dies as ship sinks off S. Africa

A FILIPINO SEAMAN DIED WHILE NINE others were rescued when their ship capsized off the coast of South Africa on Aug. 23. The Honduran captain of the Douala Tide also survived.

In his report to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Ambassador to South Africa Virgilio Reyes Jr. said the 37-foot Douala Tide was sailing from Dubai, the United Arab Emirates to Douala, Cameroon when it encountered rough seas off Port Alfred in South Africa.

The Filipino fatality was not identified.

The nine survivors were Genovevo Albarracin, Fidel Mascardo Jr., Exserio Olasiman, Bosun Jessie Villanueva, Jose Feliciano Jr., Ronelo Supot, Octavio Omaguing Jr., Nilven Dieronand Warren Erlano.

Cynthia D. Balana

RAMON MAGSAYSAY awardee Kim Sun Tae of Korea with Filipino blind students of ATRIEV, a computer school for the blind on Kamias Road in Quezon City, Thursday. Kim, who is also blind, was accompanied by his wife, Kim Jung Ja.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3083, Series of 2007.

Journalists told: Connect with masses

By Tina G. Santos

"SEEK GREATER CONNECTION WITH the society."

This was the advice of Palagummi Sainath, a reporter from India and one of this year's seven Ramon Magsaysay awardees, to fellow journalists.

Sainath, who won the journalism, literature and creative communication arts award, said he believes the richness of journalism comes from being closer with the masses.

"I would like to see the media regain the connections they've lost with the masses, the ordinary people," Sainath told the INQUIRER in an interview. "I think as more media [are] owned by corporations, the more that connection will go, because by then you cater only to [the] audience with the purchasing power and can buy your products."

Sainath, 50, said he was training a new breed of rural reporters with diverse points of view.

He said his journalism workshops were conducted directly in the villages where young protégés were taught to identify and write good stories and to become agents of change.

Sainath was cited for "his passionate commitment as a journalist to restore the rural poor to India's consciousness, moving the nation to action."

Indisposed, imprisoned

The six other awardees of Asia's version of the Nobel Prize are: the Philippines' former Senate president Jovito Salonga, government service; Korea's Kim Sun-Tae, public service; Nepal's Mahabir Pun, community leadership; China's Tang Xiyang, peace and international understanding; and China's Chung To and Chen Guancheng, emergent leadership.

Except for Salonga and Chen, the recipients of "Asia's highest honor" were presented to the press by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) on Tuesday.

Salonga, who was awarded for his "exemplary integrity and substance of his long public career in service to democracy and good government," failed to come "because of health reasons," organizers said.

Chen, who was cited for his "irrepressible passion for justice in leading ordinary Chinese citizens to assert their legitimate rights under the law" was serving a four-year prison term in China.

His wife, Yuan Weijing, said the charges were concocted by officials angry at Chen's role in publicizing a ruthless population control program in Shandong province.

Detained, too?

Yuan, who was supposed to receive the Ramon Magsaysay award on her husband's behalf, was reportedly also illegally detained and prevented from leaving Beijing.

Chung, who shares the emergent leadership award with Chen, for "his proactive and compassionate response to AIDS in China and to the needs of its most vulnerable victims" refused to comment on Chen's detention.

"It's a very sensitive issue. But I think the award is a prestigious recognition, it's a great honor. There's no obvious reason that I could think of to stop Yuan from coming here," said Chung.

Carmencita Abella, president of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, said this year's seven awardees were chosen for advancing causes "to improve lives and correct unjust social conditions across Asia."

Like other Magsaysay laureates, "their moral courage and impassioned insistence on making the societies they serve better, kinder and more equitable for everyone, especially for the marginalized, offer inspiring examples of faith, persistence and success for everyone," Abella said.

The RMAF, with Anvil Publishing, also launched Volumes 6 to 8 of its "Great Men and Women of Asia" series. The collection features the biographies of the Asian recipients and their life work which embody the awards' tradition of "greatness of spirit in selfless service to the people."

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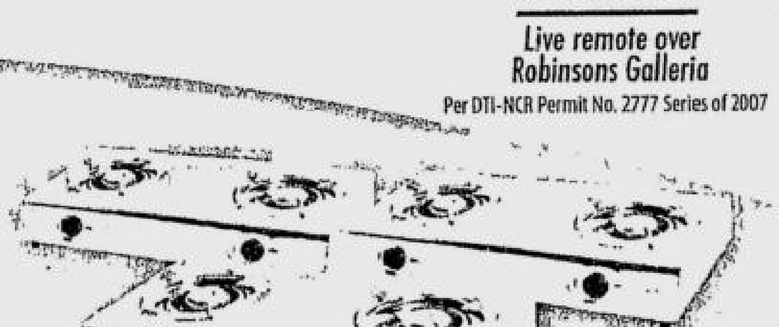

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Try him

EDITORIAL

THE NETHERLANDS HAS BEEN A GENEROUS host to Jose Ma. Sison, the founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, since he landed on its shores two decades ago. Even after the CPP and the armed wing he also founded, the New People's Army, were included in the official list of foreign terrorist organizations of the US State Department and the European Union, the Dutch government did not move to have Sison, known to generations of activists by his nickname, Joma, expelled.

While his welfare and pension benefits were suspended, he was allowed to remain in the country, on the reasonable assumption that a return to the Philippines was tantamount to a death sentence.

The Netherlands, a famously liberal state with a bias for civil liberties, has hosted other critics or outright enemies of the Philippine government. Only last March, the Permanent People's Tribunal, an independent international organization that seeks to hold governments accountable for human rights abuses, conducted a "trial" in the city of The Hague, and after five days "found" the Arroyo administration guilty of "crimes against humanity."

It strains credulity, therefore, when Sison's allies and sympathizers now charge the Dutch government with unpardonable perfidy. They reserve their sharpest barbs for the Arroyo administration, but they also accuse the Dutch of "trickery and deception" and a general lack of fair play.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño said the Dutch government did a "great disservice" to the peace process by arresting Sison. A lawyer of the National Democratic Front in Quezon City said the arrest was an "obvious" attempt to "preempt" a decision of the European Court of First Instance. "There was obviously deception on the part of the Dutch authorities," Edre Olalia added. And Satur Ocampo, the big fish of leftist politicians swimming in the political mainstream, said rather darkly: "There's a blackmail aspect in the arrest," and claimed that the harassing conduct of Dutch authorities was meant only to fish for evidence.

Another leftist leader said the arrest doomed the "ongoing" peace talks—an amazing claim, considering that peace negotiations with the communist insurgents have been stalled for over three years.

These fulminations and the instant demonization of the same government that has refused since 2002 to hand Sison over to Philippine police, are a measure of panic and desperation. They tell us that Sison's allies and sympathizers did not know what hit them.

What, exactly, is Joma Sison accused of? He is charged with "incitement to murder in the Philippines." A statement from the Public Prosecutor's Office in The Hague released on the day of his arrest said: "Sison was suspected of giving orders, from the Netherlands, to murder his former political associates in the Philippines, Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara."

Kintanar, the former NPA chief, was gunned down in 2003; Tabara, another former NPA leader, was killed in 2004, in another gangland-style execution which also claimed the life of his son-in-law. The NPA claimed responsibility for the killings.

The Arroyo administration reacted giddily to the news, with President Macapagal-Arroyo calling the arrest "a giant step toward peace, a victory for justice and the rule of law" and other officials saying the government had actually lent the Dutch authorities a hand.

But the real credit must lie with the victims' widows, who filed the case against Sison in the Netherlands. Incitement to murder is a crime in the Netherlands, and Sison will be tried in the country he has lived in for the last 20 years.

A text message from Joy Kintanar to the INQUIRER casts her cause in the neutral colors of legal language. "For now, I can only say the following: I hope Joma is given due process, that the investigation will let the truth out, that justice be served."

This is the exact kind of justice, the same kind of truth-revealing investigation, that opposition politicians like Ocampo have sought to apply to the President since the "Hello, Garci" scandal erupted over two years ago. Why, in effect, would they deny Sison his day in court?

If Sison did order the deaths of Kintanar and Tabara, no amount of revolutionary rationalization or ideological rhetoric can mask his liability.

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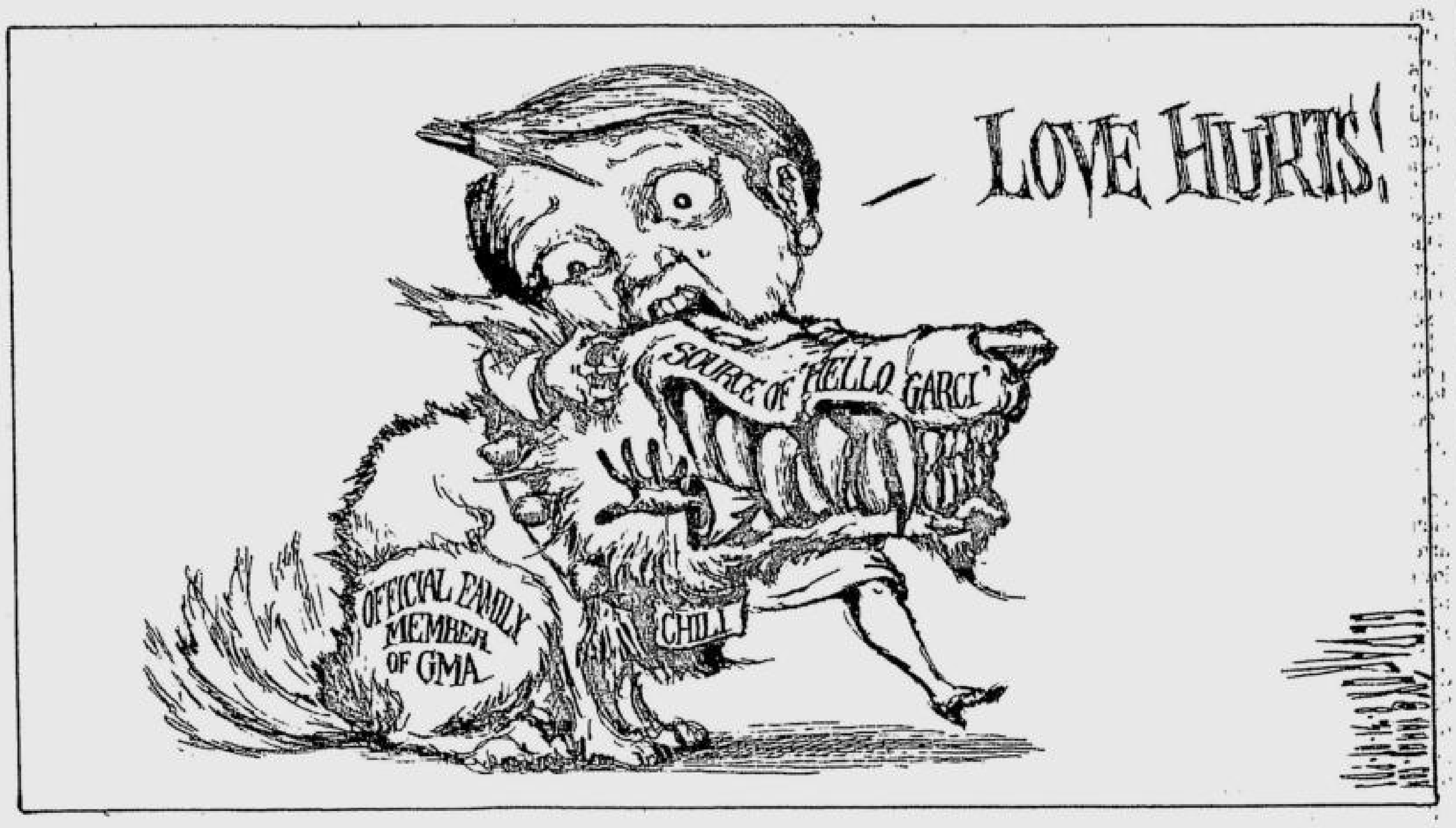


GMA panicked by Senate probe of Garci tapes

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

MALACAÑANG IS OBVIOUSLY PANICKED BY the reopening by the Senate of the investigation of the "Hello, Garci" tapes. The moment Sen. Panfilo Lacson presented T/Sgt. Vidal Doble Jr., former Armed Forces intelligence agent, to testify on the tapes, the administration immediately unleashed the heavy artillery against the opposition.

President Macapagal-Arroyo slammed "the titans of hate" in a speech. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Malacañang would invoke again EO 464 (which has already been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court) to prevent Cabinet and military officials from testifying. Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez tried to scare Lacson by threatening to file charges against those mentioned in the Leandro Aragoncillo case in the United States (among those prominently mentioned was Lacson). Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye called on the Senate to drop the Garci case and work on 24 priority bills instead. AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago tried to discredit the star witness, Doble himself. Presidential Legal Adviser Sergio Apostol said Doble can be charged with perjury if he testified.

In the Senate, administration senators tried to scare their opposition colleagues into not playing the wiretapped tapes by warning that the Anti-Wiretapping Law prohibits individuals from possessing and replaying wiretapped conversations. Senators who listen to the tapes, they warned, can be charged and, if found guilty, perpetually disqualified from public office.

And the known mouthpieces of the administration, like Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, weighed in with calls to the Senate to drop the case and "move on."

Malacañang obviously issued marching orders to its storm troopers to prevent the reinvestigation of the Garci tapes at all costs.

Why is Malacañang deathly afraid of an investigation of the Garci scandal? Obviously, it is afraid that the truth may come out.

Why would anyone be afraid of the truth? Because it will show, officially and conclusively, that GMA cheated Fernando Poe Jr. out of Malacañang in the 2004 presidential elections with the help of Garci or Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Actually, most Filipinos are already convinced that GMA cheated. To them, GMA is a fake president, a usurper. GMA herself almost confessed in that famous television mea culpa. She indirectly admitted talking to Garci and apologized to the Filipino people but stopped short of admitting the two of them cheated.

She escaped impeachment by the skin of her teeth that time. It was only through shameless maneuvering and politicking in the House of Representatives that GMA did not get the same boot that she used to kick her predecessor, President Joseph Estrada, out of office. She may not be so lucky this time.

But I am surprised, as many other Filipinos are, at the administration senators, including Sen. Joker Arroyo. Never mind Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Richard Gordon who are known GMA lovers. But Arroyo? He had a reputation of being independent (and indeed sold himself in the last elections as an "independent" senator), so what happened to him? Many people were dismayed by his arguments when he and other administration senators tried to prevent the reinvestigation of the Garci scandal.

"We cannot at this late stage of our profession be accused of being ignorant of the law not only as legislators but also as lawyers," Arroyo said. He must be joking. What these supposedly upright and respectable leaders of our country are trying to do is hide the truth from the people.

I personally have an open mind about the guilt of GMA but the Filipino people who voted these senators into office deserve to know the truth. In fact, they are asking for it. And for as long as the truth is hidden, GMA's presidency will be unstable. She will not have any peace of mind. She cannot govern well because her priority is to defend herself, knowing that her legitimacy is suspect and that her presidency is not accepted by many. Most of her efforts will be wasted on pleasing the military, her No. 1 protector, and rewarding her political allies to get their continued loyalty.

She wastes her time (and our taxes) by traveling all over the world and all over the country instead of staying in Malacañang to run the government and see to it that her subordinates also do their jobs properly. She is afraid to curb graft and corruption even if it is already staring her in the face lest those officials she would punish would help topple her. Let's admit it, she is a lame duck, a damaged President. She was already a lame duck the moment the Garci scandal broke out and the sooner she limps away the better for us.

For as long as there is no closure to the Garci controversy, she will continue to behave the same way and govern as badly. So let's go on with the investigation and give her a clean bill of health if she is innocent. But if she is guilty, say so. Then she can ask the people for forgiveness and the Filipinos, being a forgiving people, may just do that. Then we will have peace and quiet at last.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: Three contractors were asked for their fees to repair a White House gate.

American contractor: I'll charge $900—$500 for labor, $300 for materials and $100 for me.

Mexican: I'll charge $700—$400 for labor, $200 for materials and $100 for me.

Filipino: I'll charge $2,700.

White House official: Why so expensive?

Filipino: $1,000 for me, $1,000 for you, and $700 for the Mexican to do the job.

Guess who got the job.

No atheists during the bar exams

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

EACH SUNDAY IN SEPTEMBER, A STRANGE group of Filipinos observes an unusual ritual. By 5 a.m., the entire portion of Taft Avenue in front of the De la Salle University is closed to traffic. Hordes of men and women gather, come rain or shine, cheering and chanting like they were in a sports stadium, complete with marching bands, banners and confetti. Some would march in a religious procession befitting a Santacruzan, preceded by several weeks of novenas and rosaries and visits to the shrine of miracles at Manaoag, Pangasinan.

The Philippine bar examinations are on, and we Filipinos scarcely realize we are possibly alone in this strange veneration for what is, at its core, a mere licensing device to fix the minimum competence to practice a craft. Nothing more, nothing less. Yet here we elevate it to the level of "the mother of all battles."

The constitutionalist, Justice Vicente V. Mendoza, who has sat in the Supreme Court's committees to reform the bar exams, has called the bar exams an "unscientific" gauge to determine the fitness of aspiring attorneys. Whence comes the persistent allure of the bar exams for the Pinoy?

Perhaps it is because of the "gatekeeper" function of the bar exams, and in our case, those gates lead to what is assumed to be the well-rewarded life of the Pinoy attorney. The exam polices entry into an elite profession that has dominated our communal life and lorded it over the distribution of social goodies.

But if that were the only reason, then all the other sentry posts to fancy jobs and perks should elicit the same, almost mythic worship: HR departments, *padrinos* and hiring partners. So what truly sets the bar exams apart? Of all the control-points, it is this alone that embodies the meritocratic ideal, the dream that each person has an equal chance to make it by dint of hard work and diligence—the same appeal of Senate President Manuel Villar's winning slogan, "Sipag at Tiyaga."

The secret charm of the bar exams, therefore, is in the integrity and neutrality of the process, impervious to "*palakasan*." Stated most simply, the exams are blind-graded; the examiner does not know whose paper he is grading. All other measures of excellence are tainted by good old-fashioned subjectivity. Grades are pulled up or down by a host of biases, perhaps by one's *baduy*-accented English during recitation (more *baduy* than the professor's, anyway), perhaps the reserved demeanor of the fatigued working student—and these biases are carried over into the grading of written work.

And, voila, the ultimate meritocratic sieve, where veritable outsiders can outrank elite students taught by the high, the mighty and the haughty. Fair process is everything, and so-called bar scandals erupt periodically from attempts to cheat and get a leg up on the competition. The national fixation on the bar exams shows that deep in the Pinoy heart remains an intuitive belief in liberalism's romanticized premise that every person has the equal right to make his dreams come true.

* * *

When I first heard sketchy news reports of the arrest in the Netherlands of Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Ma. Sison, I thought of any of the following scenarios: one, an extradition request by the Philippine government, relating to a criminal case filed against Sison in the Philippines; two, the exercise of some form of "universal criminal jurisdiction" by Dutch authorities (if so allowed by its national law) to try Sison in the Netherlands for crimes he committed in the Philippines; or three, the start of a deportation process based on links to terrorism. Any of these can be used to support Sison's protests—echoed by his legions of disciples—that this was political harassment.

And what do recent reports now show? None of the above. Sison's arrest appears as a straightforward exercise of Dutch criminal law, for charges that he gave "orders from the Netherlands to murder" two renegade communist leaders.

Romulo Kintanar, former New People's Army chief, was shot dead in a Japanese restaurant in the middle of Quezon Memorial Circle, while Arturo Tabara was killed together with his son-in-law outside a shopping mall. The NPA had apparently owned up to executing Kintanar, calling his death an act of revolutionary justice for counter-revolutionary crimes. Kintanar's widow has confirmed that indeed she filed charges against Sison in the Netherlands, and was prepared to fly over to testify.

Therefore, it presents legal, not political, issues—or in the words of Netherlands Ambassador Robert Vornis, "a Dutch criminal investigation by the competent Dutch authorities ...on the basis of the Dutch Penal Code."

What perplexes me is why President Macapagal-Arroyo's minions are falling over one another claiming credit for the arrest, bolstering precisely Sison's lament, ironically, of "politics in command." Indeed, the Gonzalez duo have gotten into the act. Both the national security adviser and the secretary of justice have claimed that the government helped assemble the evidence to "transfer" the murder cases to the Dutch government. PNP Deputy Director General Avelino Razon has said, "This shows that there is ... strong evidence against him, that it even met the standards of the Netherlands prosecution and police teams. [It is the] triumph of our justice system."

Godsakes, if that were true, why didn't we charge Sison as a co-conspirator before Philippine courts and request (not demand, absent a treaty) his extradition? Why default on that sworn duty, and let the Dutch do all the work for us? Their explanations only betray the fragility of Philippine institutions, and explain why Kintanar's widow preferred to seek justice in the Netherlands and not on her native soil.

Gov't trying to claim credit for Sison's arrest

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE ARREST IN THE NETHERLANDS OF JOSE Ma. Sison, exiled founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines, on charges of involvement in the murder of two former comrades was hailed by President Macapagal-Arroyo as "a giant step toward peace, a victory for justice and the rule of law." Before the public joins the gloating, let us consider carefully whether the arrest was a triumph of the rule of law of the Philippine judicial system and whether it has enhanced the prospects of breaking the impasse of the stalled peace talks with the communists.

The government cannot claim credit for the arrest on Aug. 21 in Utrecht. It is not clear whether Dutch authorities arrested Sison on their own initiative, though leaders of the National Democratic Front have claimed that the Philippine government exerted pressure on The Hague. Sison is to stand trial on charges of allegedly having ordered, while on political asylum in the Netherlands, the murder of Romulo Kintanar in 2003 and Arturo Tabara in 2004, before a Dutch court for crimes committed in the Philippines under Dutch law.

The arrest took the government by surprise, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs, which claimed it did not ask the Dutch government to help arrest Sison. Despite the disclaimer, the arrest allowed the government to bask in its glow and claim progress in its domestic crackdown to crush the 39-year communist movement by 2010.

Sison's arrest came four days after the President ordered security forces to end "all armed rebellion" by the communists, Moro secessionist rebels and terrorists before the end of her term. It allowed her to deflect pressure from the European Union to put an end to the wave of death squad killings that have claimed the lives of an estimated 300 to 800 leftist activists since 2001.

The trial of Sison is certain to dredge up the murder not only of Kintanar and Tabara but also a number of killings of CPP members attributed by security authorities to the communist leadership during its internal purges in the 1980s.

It is puzzling why the Dutch authorities acted to arrest Sison only more than 20 years after he had gone on exile in their country and a year after Kintanar's widow, Gloria, and Tabara's widow, Veronica, filed with the Philippine Department of Justice complaints accusing Sison of the murder of their husbands. Dutch police came to Manila last year to investigate and get evidence for the complaints.

Kintanar, a former member of the CPP central committee until his arrest in 1991, was shot dead inside a Japanese restaurant in Quezon City on Jan. 23, 2003. Tabara was assassinated outside a mall in Quezon City on Sept. 26, 2004. Kintanar and Tabara led a faction of the CPP that broke away from Sison's leadership in the 1990s.

While Dutch Ambassador to the Philippines Robert Vornis did not comment on whether the Philippine government had a hand in the arrest, he emphasized that the criminal investigation by Dutch authorities led to the arrest "on charges that are being brought against Mr. Sison on the basis of the Dutch Penal Code."

US Ambassador Kristie Kenney lauded the arrest of Sison, but viewed it from another context: the Philippine engagement in the US-led war on terror. While the arrest was obviously a Philippine issue, the NPA "is on our [list of] foreign terrorist organizations," Kenney said. "As you know, the United States and the Philippines have all labelled the NPA a terrorist group ... we work very hard to prevent terrorist groups from getting financing and keep all our citizens safe."

The arrest came on Aug. 21, the 26th anniversary of the 1971 grenade bombing of the Liberal Party rally in Plaza Miranda, where eight people were killed and seven LP senatorial candidates were among the wounded. The trial of Sison is certain to shed more light on his responsibility for the bombing that was blamed on the communists by then President Ferdinand Marcos, although initial suspicion fell on Marcos. Victor Corpus, who had defected to the NPA after raiding the armory of the Philippine Military Academy, later revealed it was Sison who ordered the bombing.

The trial could also shed more light on the great split in the communist movement in the 1990s. Later press reports revealed that in the wake of the Plaza Miranda bombing, Sison accused Kintanar and two other Politburo members as "renegades." According to these reports, some of Kintanar's comrades admitted he was killed "not only because he knew too much" about the bombing, but because "he had dared to oppose the Utrecht command," in reference to Sison's group based in Utrecht.

In an interview with Emere Distor of Solidarity Philippines Australia Network in April 2003, in Brisbane, Nathan Quimpo, a former member of the National Democratic Front, tells of the fragmentation of the NDF in the 1990s. The CPP, according to Quimpo, was deeply split between the so-called "reaffirmists" and "rejectionists." The reaffirmists stood for the Maoist strategy for a protracted people's war of encircling the cities from the countryside. The rejectionists disagreed with this model, and called for a strategy like the politico-military framework modeled on the Vietnamese revolution.

Quimpo who did his doctorate at the Australian National University said: "The Kintanar killing is a watershed, a turning point. Before, the conflict was still mainly done through polemics and restricted to non-physical attacks. Polemics can be very heated, even abusive, but this is the first time that a major leader of the rejectionists has been killed."

Crabs and God's design

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"CRAB MENTALITY" IS SHORTHAND CREATED to describe the Pinoy penchant, like crabs in a pot, to pull down compatriots who are making a name for themselves.

I'm sure the "breakaway group" headed by Couples for Christ founder Frank Padilla would be the first to deny that "crab mentality" is the reason they caused a split in the leadership of CfC and its social development arm Gawad Kalinga. News reports and magazine articles say the conflict was "ideological" in nature, though I won't ignore talk that it was in part "personal" too.

I don't think it was an accident that rumors of differences among the CfC leadership broke out in the open shortly after Gawad Kalinga was conferred the Magsaysay Award for social development last year and Tony Meloto, executive director of GK, was named "Filipino of the Year" by the INQUIRER. Indeed, in November last year, the Board of Elders of Couples for Christ was compelled to issue a document addressing the "contradictions" that had arisen between the "mother" organization and the project. Gawad Kalinga, it said, was just one of the "seven pillars" of CfC, and that "a pillar cannot be bigger than the organization."

GK without the support of CfC, the document added, "would be just one other nice, successful social development work. And ultimately, without the base and blessing of faith, it will not renew the face of the earth according to God's design." And so, they declared, "GK needs CfC as CfC needs GK."

Couples for Christ is itself a breakaway from the Catholic Charismatic group Ligaya sa Panginoon. If I remember right, it began building its membership base as a support group for married couples who went through marriage enrichment seminars, though it soon reached out to other constituencies with "Singles for Christ" and even "Teens for Christ."

Since its founding in 1981, Couples for Christ has grown to its present size of more than a million members in 160 countries.

* * *

IN 2000, Tony Meloto, a senior CfC member, began the first Gawad Kalinga housing project in a relocation site in Dasmariñas, Cavite. This first GK community followed the model popularized by groups like Habitat for Humanity, where volunteers worked alongside housing beneficiaries to build low-cost homes out of mostly donated materials. But, tapping the growing CfC constituency, Meloto called on volunteers not just to help build homes but also to build communities, creating "caretaker teams" who conducted values formation sessions with the residents even before the homes were completed, and staying on to work on education, income generating opportunities and other community issues.

True, without its base in CfC, GK would not have grown into the fast-growing and donor-crunching machine it has become. According to a Newsbreak report, GK has created 1,200 communities, translating into 22,000 homes, raising P600 million in donation last year, with P1 billion expected by the end of this year. But it's also true that without GK, CfC would probably have remained a low-key "spiritual" lay group, without the "legitimacy" conferred by its high-profile social development project that purported to solve the country's festering social problems. As an early joint CfC and GK statement averred: "The Filipino values of integrity, honesty and *bayanihan*, manifested in GK communities, are the proper response to corruption. To conflict, the response is to attain peace by building peaceful communities."

* * *

BUT in some way, I'm glad the split among the leadership of the CfC has brought public scrutiny to bear on the real nature of CfC and of Gawad Kalinga itself.

In a previous interview with Meloto, he was at great pains to point out that GK was willing to "work with anyone," emphasizing how they had helped build communities even in Muslim-dominated areas, and that their "values education" programs were designed to be compatible with community values and to be culturally sensitive.

But the exchange of e-mails and declarations now make it obvious that GK was also in part conceived as a means of "recruiting" members to CfC, and using the "values education" modules as a way of spreading the CfC's conservative Catholic ideology. As the November 2006 statement stresses: "We must be mindful of the reality that if we eliminate poverty but lose people to non-Christian sects or cults, then we would not have achieved Jesus' mission."

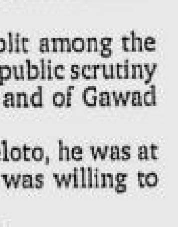
* * *

A PARTICULAR bone of contention that has emerged is the advocacy for natural family planning that apparently some GK teams had been lax on. Padilla of the Restoration Movement has bemoaned, in a letter to the CfC membership, "We are not pushing natural family planning in GK areas simply because we know some corporate partners are for population control and strongly support the use of contraceptives."

So do we take it to mean that while the old CfC leadership believed that the poor deserved to live lives of dignity by helping build homes for them, the poor deserved homes only if they would follow every command of the CfC leadership, including the use of NFP?

At the heart of any "nice, successful social development work," after all, is respect for the dignity of all individuals, including respect for their right to make choices and decisions. I would think that making responsible choices and decisions about your fertility, about having only the number of children you could raise in dignity and love, is one of the marks of good family life. Why would some leaders of CfC and GK deny housing to those couples who choose to live and procreate responsibly? And why would they risk destroying the organization over what is essentially a private personal choice? Is this what they perceive to be God's design?

Art and heritage



LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

JUDGING ANY KIND OF COMPETITION CAN BE tricky. Even after judges have made a choice and rendered a decision, there will always be someone who will not agree, usually one who did not win a prize (or the grand prize).

Historically, one of the significant contested art competitions was that of the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP), which saw the division of Philippine art into the "conservative" and the "modern." In 1955, the Rotary Club sponsored a competition undertaken by the AAP with a grand prize of P2,500 (a big sum at the time). All three winners—Galo Ocampo, Manuel Rodriguez Sr. and Vicente Manansala—were of the "modern" school.

Excitement began soon after the ceremonial ribbon was cut for the AAP exhibition at the Northern Motors showroom on UN Avenue. Twenty painters representing the "conservative" school marched in and surprised guests by taking their paintings off the walls and walking out. The 32 paintings withdrawn from the show were exhibited in the street. Filipinos enjoy controversy, so people who wouldn't normally give art a second glance came to see both exhibitions.

Time has vindicated the moderns, many of whom not only became established painters but have since been elevated to the rank of National Artist. If you look at the roster of National Artists you will notice that only two, the earliest ones, were "conservatives": Fernando Amorsolo (painting) and Guillermo Tolentino (sculpture).

I was recently on a panel of judges for the Art Petron competition and I was glad that our group included National Artists Napoleon Abueva and Bencab, whose stature made the decision of the board final. While each of the judges had their own choices, we generally came up with a consensus after three screenings. With accurate number crunching provided by a computer program and a team of accountants, we came up with our list of winners.

What made Art Petron different from other competitions, which simply allowed the artist to create anything they fancied, was that it challenged the artists to go beyond themselves by imposing a theme—in this case, "Heritage." This explained why I was invited to the panel of judges, and also why the paintings in oil and watercolor, as well as the photography had many churches, bridges, lighthouses, monuments and other landmarks. While the theme was meant to liberate the artists from their usual output, I sensed that, on the contrary, many were boxed in by stock images of Intramuros, Fort Santiago, the Rizal monument in Luneta and the Bonifacio monument in an area of Caloocan known today as "Monumento." I don't recall anyone doing the Rice Terraces, the Angono Petroglyphs, the Manunggul jar, or even a natural heritage site like Taal, Biak-na-Bato, or the Tubbataha reefs.

How does an artist go beyond heritage? How can he re-present something that is old and transform it into something new?

Going through the entries of these young artists made me know that art is alive and well in the country. It made me happy that young people were studying in schools that taught them to paint and draw correctly, competently, but what I found lacking was content. Many of the images in the painting and watercolor categories were drawn from pictures downloaded from the Internet or copied straight out of books. I noticed that many entries carried the same perspective, the same angle, the same cropping, meaning they had used one and the same picture. Maybe they should have done a little bit more research?

Somehow I got the sense that some artists did not even visit the heritage sites, landmarks and monuments in their work, much less have a grasp, or even an appreciation, of why these icons of heritage are considered as such. Just because something is old does not mean it is to be considered heritage. What makes a landmark, monument, or site significant enough to warrant our appreciation and protection?

These were questions I asked myself as I went through the entries and I hope the same questions crossed the minds of the painters. Art is like drawing water from a well. If you do not replenish it with reading, observation and conversation, the well runs dry and the resulting art is but mere draftsmanship.

The photography entries were more engaging simply because the winning entries were blown up to museum-quality size. I asked myself why the photographs were better and realized that, unlike painters who could rely on stock images from a photo file and their memory, photographers had to physically visit a heritage site and through their viewing lens give us an angle, a frame shot in time, that would go beyond what we would normally see. For example, three runners up that I believe deserved grand prizes were: a view of the Cebu cathedral seen from inside a car during a rainy day; Paco cemetery shot with infrared and printed in black and white, transforming acacia trees into cherry blossoms; and a street urchin jumping across an Intramuros rampart showing an ancient cannon aimed at the clock tower of Manila City Hall. This last image had some sexual undertones that are best left to the viewer's imagination.

By drawing attention to heritage at risk, Art Petron deserves our thanks. By encouraging artists to think heritage and allowing viewers to share that vision are rewards in themselves.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

'Bayaning doktor'

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

ONE AFTER ANOTHER THEY CAME, EACH DELIVERING A brief eulogy for their Doc Louie. It was the final night of the wake for Dr. Glorioso Saturay, held in the covered court of Barangay Pag-asa in Quezon City. The venue was appropriate since Doc Louie had served once as barangay captain, one of the many civic engagements he had in his life.

I sat through some of the eulogies, reflecting quietly. All through the week, I had been getting text messages from friends who had known Doc Louie. The texts that came in sometimes described him as "*napakabait*," and other times as "*napakabuti*," a rare combination. Both words mean "good" but in different senses. "*Mabait*" means someone who maintains good interpersonal relations and is kind and caring. "*Mabuti*" on the other hand, and when combined with "doctor," refers to someone who excels in his or her profession or work. At the same time, it can refer to someone perceived to have a strong ethical sense, a morally upright person.

Most physicians I know do only medicine, shuttling from home to one clinic to another. Doc Louie was different, a man with many lives, and I mean that in the sense of wearing many hats, of moving in different social networks. It was not until his wake that I learned that he had been a barangay captain—or more specifically, "*mabuting alagad ng barangay.*"

TB doctor

I knew him mainly in his role as a community doctor. We had worked together in an NGO called AKAP, short for Alay Kapwa Kilusang Pangkalusugan, in the early 1980s.

Doc Louie had come to AKAP in a roundabout way. Shortly after he got his medical degree from the University of Santo Tomas in 1960, he began working at Quezon Institute as a volunteer doctor. QI was the country's largest TB hospital, supported largely by funds from the Philippine Tuberculosis Society. It was named after President Manuel L. Quezon, who had himself died of TB.

TB had come under control in many parts of the world, but the Philippines retained the dubious distinction of having one of the highest TB infection rates in the world. TB was not an attractive option for doctors, given that most of the patients were poor. The disease was also heavily stigmatized, its infectiousness often grossly exaggerated, so that some people even held their breath when they'd pass QI.

In the 1960s, Filipino doctors were leaving for the United States in droves, but Doc Louie stayed. Not only that, he chose to work with QI, and with Dr. Mita (Mamita) Pardo de Tavera, director of the institution. Mamita and Doc Louie learned, early enough, that TB was a disease linked closely to poverty. Both of them worked for years in QI, in close contact with TB patients, but never got infected. "If you're well-nourished and in good health," Mamita always told me, "you're likely to resist TB."

Over the years, Mamita and Doc Louie became disillusioned with the institutional approach to TB. They felt that the key to controlling TB was education of patients as well as their families and communities. Even while at QI, Mamita was testing some of her ideas in a limited community extension program. She found TB patients in communities had better recovery rates if they had support from social networks, especially with the medicines. Many TB patients would take medicines and then stop as soon as they felt better, which meant they were never really cured.

Eventually, Mamita established AKAP to concentrate on a community-based approach to TB. Doc Louie joined her on a part-time basis. By then, he had received extensive training in TB, even becoming a fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians and Surgeons.

AKAP emphasized the training of community health workers to conduct health education, to drum up support for BCG vaccination, to collect and examine sputum samples from people who were suspected of having TB, and to supervise treatment. Rifampicin had just come on the market as a wonder anti-TB drug and AKAP had support from a Dutch Catholic foundation, CEBEMO, to give out these drugs with the condition that this be done as part of a community health program.

Doc Louie was especially devoted to the case-finding component of the project. He had trained extensively on the laboratory procedures and was confident he could pass on his skills to community health workers. He knew everything about laboratory procedures, but he was also intrigued by the potentials of bringing the lab tests to the field, through the health workers. He was excited telling me stories about how health workers would convince families to bring someone to have his or her sputum examined. Remember TB was (and still is) stigmatized, so this was not easy.

Doc Louie was also proud of how the community health workers had become experts at examining sputum samples. One time he pitted a group of health workers against medical technologists to examine several samples, and he said the community health workers, some barely literate, readily won. I can still hear Doc Louie telling me about the informal contest, and its results. He would get even more excited when we'd look through results of the TB treatment, with very few dropouts among the patients and, of course, a high cure rate.

After AKAP, Doc Louie continued his crusade against TB, eventually becoming medical director of San Juan de Dios Charity Polyclinic in Quiapo. Over the years, he handled some 30,000 TB patients, finding ways to get them medicines and encouraging them to finish their treatment

I lost touch with him for a time. But when we were able to connect on the phone, he told me about all the success stories. I could imagine him like we were in AKAP again, euphoric about the results of the community work.

I am told Doc Louie continued to see TB patients even after he fell ill.

Secret lives

At Doc Louie's wake, I didn't recognize anyone but I wasn't surprised. This was more of his home network, composed of people who knew him as the barangay captain. Earlier, there was another wake in Quiapo, where there were more people from his world of TB control.

Doc Louie also had another life many people were not aware of. During our years together in AKAP, I knew he was active in the movement against the Marcos dictatorship. Many of us were involved, too, but it was not something we would discuss openly. We came together in AKAP to serve the communities by controlling TB. Outside of AKAP, we had our own lives, our own networks.

At Doc Louie's wake, there were signs of that militant past, like a bulletin board for people to write their tributes. It had the heading "Dr. Saturay. . .Makabayang Doktor," a nationalist doctor. And in one eulogy, I heard him described as "*Bayaning Doktor*" (a doctor hero). A good doctor he was, both *mabait* and *mabuti*. And a good *bayaning doktor* he was, part of an all too rare breed in his love of the Philippines and Filipinos.

Inquirer singling out the GSIS and Winston Garcia?

IF THE INQUIRER WILL PLEASE REVIEW its recent issues, it will notice that hardly a week passed by without criticisms against the Government Service Insurance System getting published in the Opinion pages. We are, thus, tempted to ask why the INQUIRER seemed to have developed a penchant for, or perhaps a quota of, publishing at least one GSIS criticism per week. What gives?

We wrote our side to every letter and article written against us, but for some reason, our replies either got butchered, or worse, never got published at all.

Last week, columnist Solita Monsod also joined the bashing bandwagon, writing in detail two revived issues against the GSIS, promising to write more. What is sad about this is that her articles come more like sweeping judgments about the GSIS, wholly citing only one source who has a known bad blood against the GSIS. There was not much as a glare of the GSIS side.

Another columnist, Ramon Farolan, pulled the worst stunt in this case study for journalism. Last Monday, he, so assuredly, said that GSIS President and General Manager Winston Garcia was recently seen visiting a cabaret in Paris.

Not only is this distasteful, it is also a blatant lie!

Ever since he became head of the GSIS, Mr. Garcia never visited France or Paris. We are aghast at how Farolan turned the INQUIRER's Opinion section into a venue for peddling lies. Entertainment writers have it better; at least they double-check their facts first.

Please be informed that when Mr. Garcia took over the helm of the GSIS, he instituted reforms that safeguarded the financial interests of the members and pensioners by cleaning the GSIS records of fake members and fake claims; getting rid of the syndicates that bled the GSIS of its financial gains; and updating records and payments of premiums and loans.

As a result, the Commission on Audit has reported that the total assets of the GSIS had reached the unprecedented level of P411.19 billion as of 2006, extending the actuarial life of the GSIS to more than 46 years from 24 years. As a result, GSIS members and pensioners are assured of receiving their benefits well into the future. The proof of the pie is in the eating, and the expanded GSIS pie shows that Garcia is doing his job well.

We believe that Farolan has violated the Code of Ethics for Journalists by reporting falsely that Garcia was seen in Paris "recently" visiting a saloon show. Garcia was never in Paris "recently" and he never visited the Crazy Horse saloon as Farolan claimed. As a matter of fact, we reiterate, he has never visited France or its capital, Paris, since he became head of the GSIS.

We demand an apology to be published in Farolan's column or in any appropriate but prominent page in the INQUIRER.

—ELLA E. VALENCERINA,
vice president, Public Affairs Office,
Government Service Insurance System

1. The INQUIRER doesn't solicit, much less manufacture, letters for or against any institution or individual. If we have published many letters against the GSIS lately, it's because we have been receiving many letters complaining about the GSIS. In fact, many more were not published.

2. As for the GSIS responses, the INQUIRER has tried to accommodate all of them, except for those that were evidently written by its PR outfit but disguised as citizens' reactions. Some letters had to be "butchered" either for reasons of space or for clarity, but without changing the "essentials."

3. It is not the INQUIRER's policy to dictate to its columnists what topics they should write about or how they should write them.—Ed.

* * *

If Ms Valencerina had just checked with the office of her boss, she would have been told that I called him up at least three weeks before my first column came out, precisely to ask for his side of the story. He was "at a meeting," so I asked to talk to his executive assistant, a lady. Alas, although I jotted her name down, I cannot locate the note.

Anyway, I told her exactly the issues I wanted clarified, and she told me that she would have "someone" from the public or media relations office call me up to give the answers. No one ever did.

I not only Googled the GSIS-Union Bank contract, the GSIS-COA issues, GSIS, Union Bank and COA separately and various names, I also obtained copies of the legal documents pertinent to the case—prepared by both sides—and read all of them, before I wrote a single word.

The role of innocent victim and martyr does not suit either the GSIS or Ms Valencerina.

—SOLITA MONSOD,
columnist, Inquirer

* * *

My editors will determine if I have violated the Code of Ethics for Journalists—not the GSIS. The column speaks for itself. The main issue here is not Winston Garcia's absence or presence in Paris but the performance of the GSIS. This is what matters to government pensioners who are the primary beneficiaries of GSIS operations. What good are the huge assets of the GSIS if the funds do not reach the intended beneficiaries on time, or at all?

The GSIS demands an apology. How ironic coming from an agency that has rarely, if at all, issued apologies to those who have suffered or been inconvenienced by their inefficiency and ineptitude.

—RAMON J. FAROLAN,
columnist, Inquirer

Pensioner dies without getting GSIS pension

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK INQUIRER COLUMNISTS Solita Monsod and Ramon Farolan for taking up the cudgels for GSIS members and pensioners who are not receiving their government's social security benefits regularly and promptly. They mentioned in their columns the letter I sent to the INQUIRER about my father, who has not received his GSIS pension for the past four months despite his children's continuous follow-ups at the GSIS office here in Naga City.

We repeatedly told them we could no longer wait indefinitely for the release of the pension because my father was then confined at the ICU of a private hospital. Our appeals went for naught. No pension came, and it appeared nothing was forthcoming. We had to transfer my father from the private to a public hospital because we could no longer afford the cost of private hospitalization.

I would like to inform the GSIS and Winston Garcia that my father died on Aug. 24, a day after I wrote the INQUIRER. He passed away after three weeks in the hospital without receiving his GSIS pension when he needed it most.

Our family, while lamenting our loss, hopes that if my father's death would serve a purpose, it would be to serve notice to the GSIS of the plight and grievances of countless other pensioners similarly situated as my father was.

—ELMER S. CASILLAN,
elmer_casillan@yahoo.com

Curse of the Garci tapes

THE "GARCI" TAPES WILL PREDICTABLY hog the headlines again in the next few weeks. The issue has acquired attributes of immortality that will hound Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo not only until the end of her term (stolen?) but beyond her earthly existence, and into the pages of history. The Garci episode will have a distinctive niche in the annals of the country's history like the Pact of Biak-na-Bato, the Nindy Aquino and Andres Bonifacio murders, and similar incidents of national disgrace.

Reacting to media's enthusiastic welcome to Vidal Doble's revised version of the bugging activities of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), GMA pleads that she has a country to run, terrorists to fight, poor people to feed, etc.; she is too busy to be distracted by issues casting aspersions on her legitimacy. The fact is, there is nothing GMA can do anymore in the unfortunate Garci affair. The majority of the people have long condemned her for stealing the presidency in the 2004 elections and that is how history will be written, regardless of how the stock market will perform or how the peso-dollar exchange rate will be.

Attempts to block the inquiry into the new allegations of Doble will only exacerbate the public's contempt for GMA's administration. A wise gesture GMA can make is to drop the name Macapagal in identifying herself—to spare the late President Diosdado Macapagal from the stigma attached to her person.

The proposed Senate investigation would, however, be most useful if the Commission on Elections and military personnel involved would be pinned down and punished, and if legislation would be enacted so that the curse of the Garci tapes will never visit future elections again.

—E. P. DAKANAY JR.,
43 Baltazar St., Philamlife Village,
Pamplona, Las Piñas City

Boxers show officials qualities needed to lead

I'M PROUD TO BE A FILIPINO—ONCE AGAIN!

The triumph of our Filipino boxers over the Mexican boxers in the recently concluded Boxing World Cup is something that every Filipino should be proud of. They showed the whole world the character of a true Filipino. Their courage, patience, determination and discipline are the qualities that made them champions. So, congratulations to them.

I hope our newly elected officials, in doing their jobs, will show the same qualities. They should always keep in mind the welfare of the majority. I wish and pray that they also show character in fighting for the common good. I hope they possess the qualities that our boxing champions have. They need that, to be able to stamp out poverty and graft and corruption.

Unless our government officials show courage, patience, determination and discipline in performing their duties, our nation will never be great again.

—EDWIN OCAMPO SURWELA,
ediodel_anthony@yahoo.com

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August 18
2:00 - 4:00PM
Performance by TRICKS' Claymates
Game by TRICKS
Naturals Fashion Show
Game by [illegible]
To be hosted by [illegible]
August 19
4:00 - 6:00PM
Performance by Iya Villania
Meet the Palmolive
Circle of 10
To be hosted by Belamae
Robinsons Place Ermita
September 1 - 6
September 1
2:00 - 3:00PM
Do it Right: How to Take Care of your Skin by Pond's and Vaseline with Beauty Expert [illegible]
3:00 - 3:30PM
Dove: Release the Beauty Within with Nicole [illegible]
3:30 - 4:00PM
Game by Clear and Sunsilk
4:00 - 5:00PM
Talk on Skin care with Ms. Vicki Belo
To be hosted by [illegible]
September 2
2:00 - 3:30PM
Performance by Roxanne Barcelo
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Across the **NATION**

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Bishop links priest's murder to funds for new parish church

RIGONAN

By Cristina Arzadon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAOAG CITY—RESENTMENT OVER DONATIONS that went to the construction of a new P5-million parish church in Pinili town may have cost the life of Fr. Florante Rigonan, police said.

Rigonan, parish priest of Saint Isadore in Pinili, started working for the construction of the church last year to replace an old structure that parishioners had been using for decades.

The priest found the Macalma couple, whose children are living abroad, as benefactors.

Police said Rigonan had just left the house of Florencio Macalma on Tuesday night after dinner and a prayer service for the household when he was gunned down on his way to his van in Barangay Puritac in Pinili.

Church staff said Rigonan started earning the trust of the Macalmas last year when the priest supposedly begged off from receiving an amount from them for his personal use.

Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Ilocos police director, said investigators are looking at "envy" as a possible motive behind the killing.

Witnesses

"We are not discounting the theory that relatives of the Macalmas could have been envious of the funds that were being channeled to the church through Father Rigonan," Bataoil said.

He said police were piecing together the testimonies of at least three people invited for questioning.

Laoag Bishop Sergio Utleg believed that those behind the murder were driven by resentment because of the amount that the priest received for the church's construction.

Bird flu surveillance starts

LAOAG CITY—THE PROVINCIAL VETERINARY office (PVET) has identified wetlands in the towns of Pagudpud, Paoay and Bangui as surveillance areas for migratory birds.

Dr. Loida Chee, provincial veterinarian, said migratory birds had been sighted in large swamps in Barangay Saud in Pagudpud, at the Manayon marshland in Bangui, and at the Paoay Lake since December last year.

"Migration season normally begins in September and they leave our area around April or May. We expect thousands of migratory birds to flock toward our area because of its proximity from Taiwan and other Chinese territories," she said.

Migratory birds have been tagged as natural carriers of the avian influenza virus or bird flu.

The PVET has reactivated the provincial avian influenza task force in line with the bird-flu preparedness of the province.

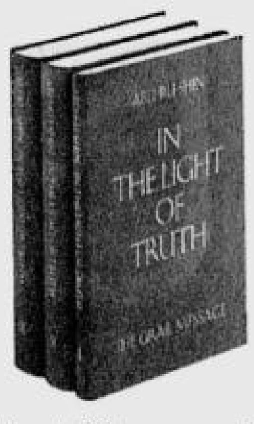
Chee said the towns were identified as critical areas for surveillance because thousands of wild waterfowls and other species of migratory birds, mostly cattle egrets, were seen.

She noted, however, that fewer birds flocked to Ilocos Norte from June 2006 to June this year compared to the migration season during the same period in 2005.

The PVET will start collecting blood samples from fowls and native chicken beginning October to determine whether they are positive of the bird flu virus. *Cristina Arzadon, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Why does God allow all this?
What is Truth?
Are you searching for answers?
What is the meaning of life?
Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going?
What is death? Does everything really end with it?
Can we evade responsibility in life?
What is "the beyond"?
What is fate?

In the Light of Truth
The Grail Message



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MESSAGES

The Philippine College of Physicians extends its warmest congratulation to the Officers, Board of Directors and Members of the Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity on the occasion of your Annual Convention on 1 September 2007 at the Grand Ballroom, Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila.

The problem of obesity in our country today is real and posses a constant challenge to us physicians, specialists or non-specialists, and to some of our allies in the health profession, the dieticians and nutritionists. With the latest updates and advances in the management of obesity that your scientific program offers, we hope the participants will see this as an opportunity to enrich their knowledge and expertise in the assessment and approach to weight management.

We wish you success in this endeavor and in all your future undertaking in the years to come.

FERNANDO G. AYUYAO, MD, FPCP
President
Philippine College of Physicians

With great pleasure, I thank you all for sharing with us another milestone in the history of the Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity.

The 2007 PASOO Annual Convention with the theme "OBESITY ATTACK" is not only a CALL to increase our conscious effort to fight this disease but more importantly to share with our members and health care providers updates on the different concerns and issues relevant to this chronic LIFESTYLE DISEASE. Our invited local and foreign experts will undoubtedly provide the necessary insights to face the many challenges of OBESITY.

Likewise, let me take this opportunity to invite you to plan to join us in our very first informative and interactive WELLNESS SUMMIT that will happen on September 2, 2007 Sunday at the Megatrade Hall 1. This summit with the theme "BAWAS TIMBANG, DAGDAG BUHAY" promises to provide everyone an opportunity to learn all about the disease and the healthy way to fight and treat OBESITY in the village of fitness and health we have organized for everyone.

Colleagues and friends, I wish you another enriching conference and an enjoyable and exciting summit!

ROSA ALLYN G. SY MD, FPCP, FPSEM
Over-all Chair, 2007 PASOO Annual Convention & Wellness Summit
President, Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity

Welcome to the 2007 Annual Convention of the Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight & Obesity.

This year's convention theme, "OBESITY ATTACK", a comprehensive scientific program will provide participants with the latest developements in basic and clinical obesity care. Topics include Obesity and the Metabolic Syndrome, International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Guidelines for Metabolic Syndrome in Children, Adipokines: Linking Obesity and Cardiovascular Diseases, Fat in the Liver and Insulin Resistance – Is There a Cure?, Perinatal Programming, Obesity & Chronic Diseases, Effective Meal Planning and Bariatric Surgery.

It is our objective to increase awareness and to fight rapidly increasing prevalence of obesity by sharing updates on the management and relevant issues. It is with great hope that we can provide management and understanding of obesity and its health consequences.

We hope that you join us in this very fruitful and enlightening event.

MARY ANNE LIM-ABRAHAN, MD
Chairperson - Scientific Commitee 2007 PASOO Annual Convention
& Treasurer, PASOO

Have you ever asked these questions? Why am I fat?" How come it is very difficult to lose weight even if I almost don't eat anything? I need help to lose weight! Who should I consult? Should I take pills to lose weight?

The Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity (PASOO) is pleased to invite all to the first Wellness Summit on weight management with the theme "Bawas Timbang, Dagdag Buhay" to be held on September 2, 2007 at the Megatrade Hall at SM Mega Mall. It is hoped that this one day interactive session will provide the answers to the questions above and many more.

Topics of interest include:
1. Defining obesity. What are the guidelines? How does one measure fatness? What is the Body Mass Index (BMI)? Why is it important to measure one's waist and hip?
2. Understanding the Mechanisms of Obesity. What causes obesity? What controls your food impulses?
3. What are the health hazards that accompany obesity?
4. How to control weight with proper lifestyle modification. What are the latest on diets? What about fad diets? What's an effective exercise program? What are new exercise tips?
5. Consulting with your physician on a weight management program. Is there a role for medications or surgery?

A participant is given the opportunity to learn about weight control and wellness in a fun way, through interactive sessions in the booths manned by experts. A highlight of the day's activities is a press conference to drumbeat awareness on this important epidemic that is leading Filipinos, both adults and children, to an increased prevalence of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

After the press conference, there will be a lay forum on "Understanding obesity: Magtanong kayo?" This will be an excellent opportunity for lay participants to ask all the questions they have. This will be followed by interesting demonstrations on the best way to lose weight through exercise, aerobics, belly dancing and Pilates. Finally, there will be a live demo on cooking a healthy meal for the obese family.

Elizabeth P. Pacheco
ELIZABETH PAZ-PACHECO MD, FPCP, FPSEM
Chair, Wellness Summit 2007
& PASOO Secretary

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Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight & Obesity
2007 ANNUAL CONVENTION
Theme : "OBESITY ATTACK"
Grand Ballroom, Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila
September 1, 2007

7:00 - 8:00 am Registration
8:00 - 8:15 am Invocation
MA. ANTONIETTA CORAZON S. SISON, MD
Secretary, PASOO Cagayan de Oro Chapter
8:15 - 8:25 am National Anthem
8:25 - 8:35 am Welcome Address
ROSA ALLYN G. SY MD, PASOO President
8:35 - 8:50 am Cordial Message
JEAN-MARC OLIVE, MD
WHO Representative in the Philippines
8:50 - 9:00 am Opening Remarks
MARY ANNE LIM-ABRAHAN, MD
Treasurer & Scientific Committee Chair
9:00 - 9:45 am PLENARY SESSION I :
Chair : Edgardo L. Tolentino, Jr., MD
"PSYCHOLOGICAL & SOCIAL CORRELATES OF OBESITY IN WOMEN"
Speaker : Prof. Tessa Van Der Merwe
9:45 - 11:00 am SYMPOSIUM I :
OBESITY & THE METABOLIC SYNDROME
Chair : Roberto C. Mirasol, MD
9:45 - 10:05 am IDF Guidelines for Metabolic Syndrome in Children
Speaker : Sioksoan Chan-Cua, MD
10:05 - 10:30 am *Adipokines*: Linking Obesity & the Metabolic Sydrome
Speaker : Elizabeth Paz-Pacheco, MD
10:30 - 10:55 am Fat in the Liver and Insulin Resistance – Is there a Cure?
Speaker : Rosa Allyn G. Sy, MD
10:55 - 11:00 am OPEN FORUM
11:00 - 11:10 am Launching of PASOO Website
11:10 – 11:45 am Opening of Exhibits and Coffee Break
11:45 - 12:30 nn PLENARY SESSION 2:
Chair : Josephine Carlos-Raboca, MD
"PERINATAL PROGRAMMING, OBESITY & CHRONIC DISEASES"
Speaker : Mary Anne Lim- Abrahan, MD
12:30 - 1: 30 pm DEBATE :
WHAT IS AN EFFECTIVE MEAL PLANNING APPROACH?
Chair : Sanirose S. Orbeta, RN, MS, FADA
1:30 - 2:45 pm SIMULTANEOUS LUNCH SYMPOSIUM
A. ABBOTT
"WOMEN & OBESITY: IT'S MORE THAN AN ISSUE OF SIZE"
Speaker : Prof. Tessa Van Der Merwe
B. LRI
2:45 - 3:30 pm PLENARY SESSION 3
Chair :Laura Trajano-Acampado, MD
"OBESITY AND CANCER"
Speaker : Ruby T. Go, MD
3:30 - 4:45pm SYMPOSIUM 2 :
IS OBESITY JUST A FATE?
Chair : Edith Arceo-Dalisay, MD
3: 30 - 3:45 pm How Obese is the Nation?
Speaker : Felicidad V. Velandria, RND
3:45 - 4:10 pm Is Nutrition the fuel for Obesity?
Speaker : Rodolfo F. Florentino, MD
4:10 - 4: 35 pm Bariatric Surgery : Current State
Speaker : Hildegardes C. Dineros, MD
4:35 - 4:45 pm OPEN FORUM
4:45 - 5:45 "HOW TO LOOK 20 LBS. LESS IN 20 SECONDS"
Chair : Ma. Teresa Plata-Que, MD
Speaker : Ms. Olen Juarez Lim
5:45 – 6:00 pm Closing Remarks
Sanirose S. Orbeta, RN, MS, FADA
PASOO, Vice President

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PASOO Wellness Summit
Theme: "Bawas Timbang, Dagdag Buhay"
September 2, 2007 (Sunday)
SM Megatrade Hall 1, 5th Level, Bldg. B,
SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City

MORNING SCHEDULE
11:00 am - 12:00 nn
Opening of Exhibits
Guests of Honor
Dr. Olive – WHO
Dr. Duque – DOH
Dr. Esperanza Cabral DSWD
Invocation
National Anthem
Welcome Remarks
Dr. Rosa Allyn G. Sy
President - PASOO
Inspirational Message
Guests of Honor
Opening Message
Dr. Elizabeth Paz-Pacheco
Chair-Wellness Summit

AFTERNOON SCHEDULE
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
LAY FORUM
UNDERSTANDING OBESITY
Magtanong Kayo?
• Definition
• Health risks
THE BEST WAY TO LOSE WEIGHT
THROUGH EXERCISE
The F-I-T-T definition of good exercise
with Mia Fojas, MD
EXERCISE DEMOSTRATION
• Aerobic demonstration
• Belly dancing with Ms. Jill Ngo
• PILATES with Ms. Plinky Recto
LIVE Cooking Demo from Nestle
(Cooking a healthy meal for the obese family)
* With special participation of invited celebrities

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Army says 4 NPA rebs captured

LUCENA CITY—AT LEAST FOUR suspected New People's Army rebels were captured after a brief combat with government forces on Wednesday in the village of Almacen in Unisan, Quezon, the military spokesperson here said yesterday.

Army Maj. Rodolfo Tayson, deputy spokesperson of the Armed Forces Southern Luzon Command (Solcom) based here in Camp Nakar, identified two of the rebels as one Ka Marlon, alleged vice platoon leader of a unit under the NPA-Guerrilla Front 41 (NPA-GF 41), and a certain Ka Joan, a ranking leader of an NPA propaganda unit.

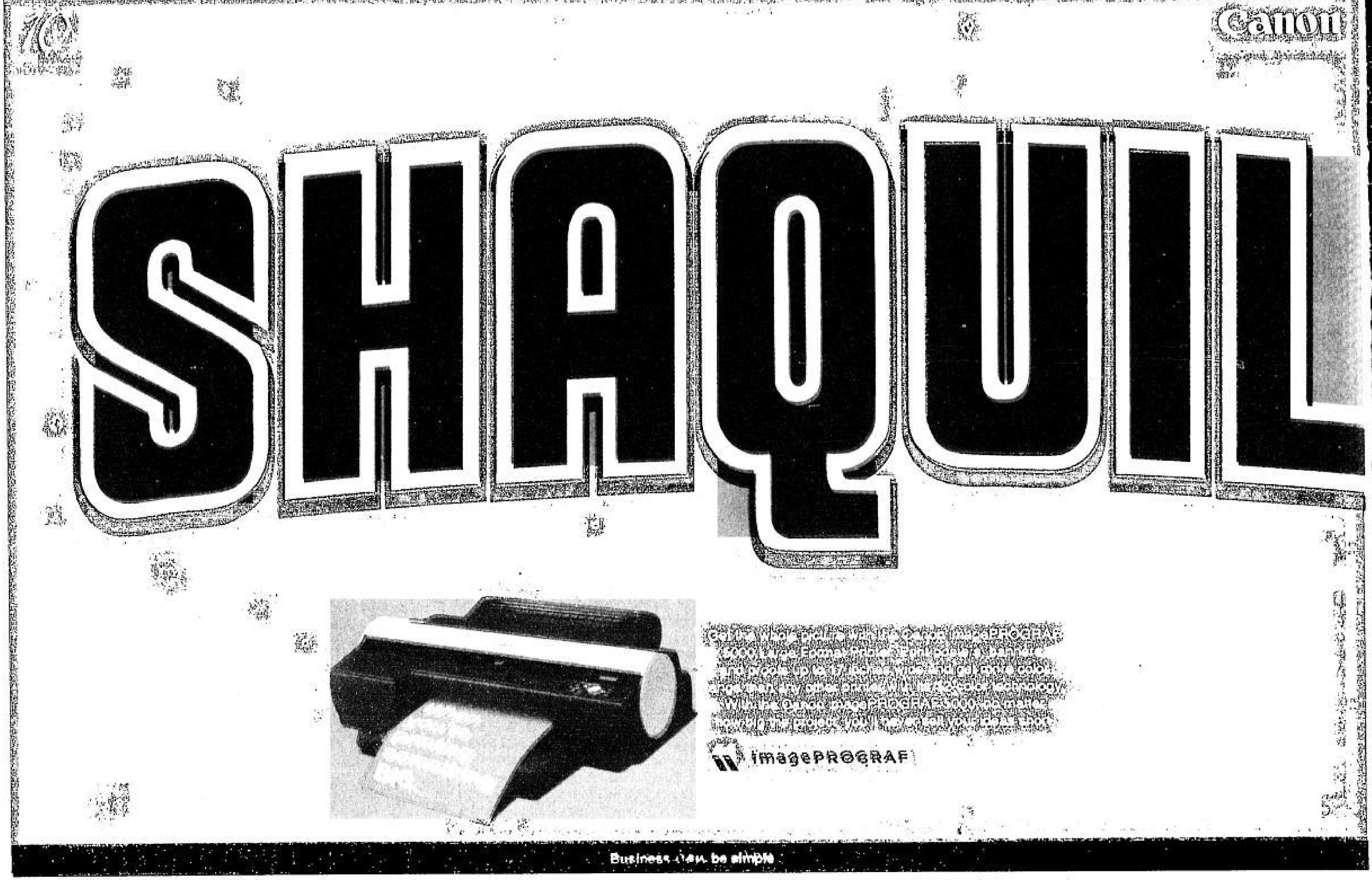
Tayson said that at around 4 p.m. a patrol team from the Army's 76th Infantry Battalion chanced upon about 30 NPA rebels, who were about to collect "taxes" from villagers.

A gunfight ensued, lasting for about 15 minutes. The rebels escaped in several directions, leaving behind four comrades who were cornered by the government troopers.

The captured rebels were not wounded, said the report.

There were no casualties on the government side, Tayson said.

He said the NPA leadership in Southern Tagalog wanted to reactivate a guerrilla unit operating at the Bondoc Peninsula and the Lamon Bay area. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*



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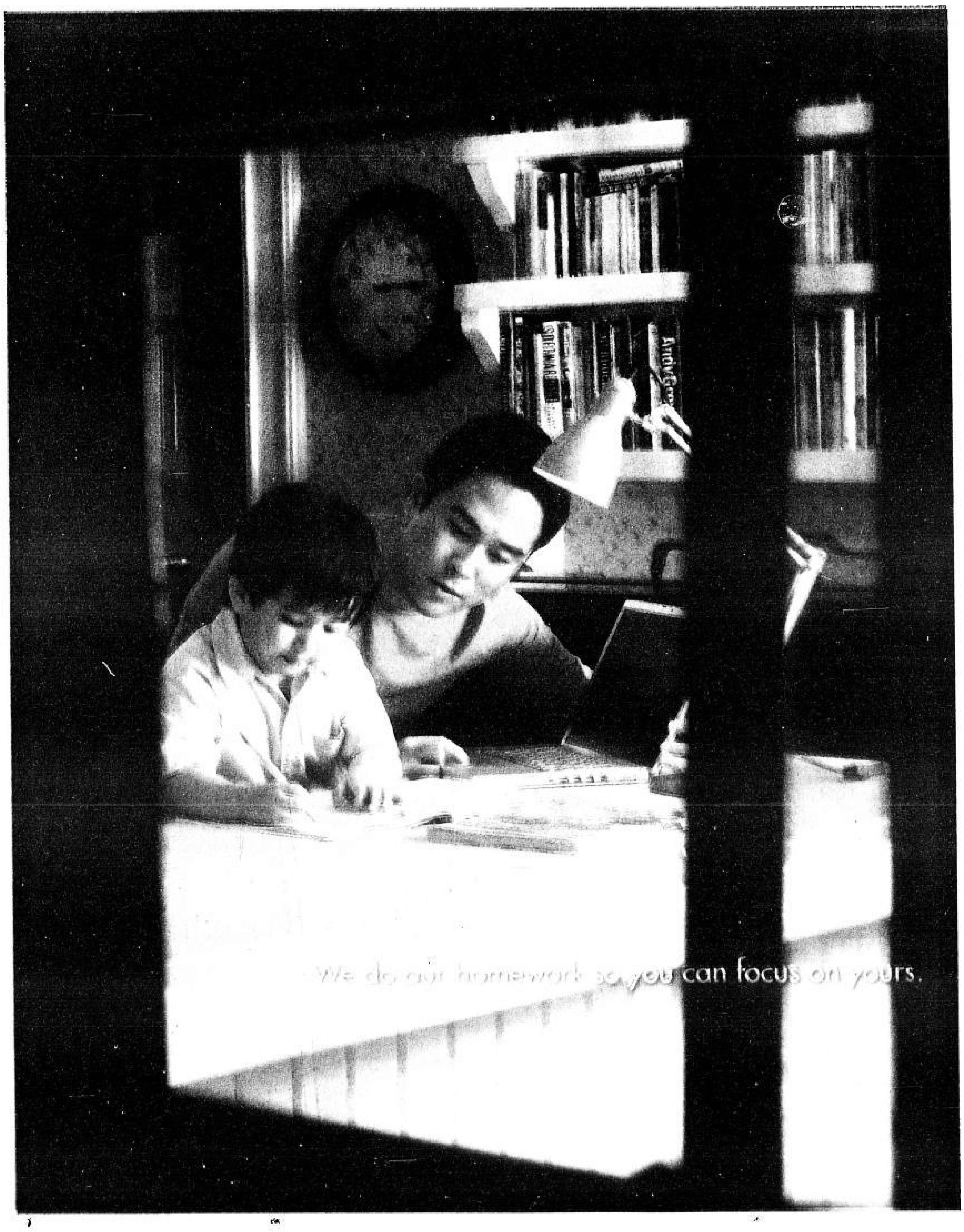
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MERALCO
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AN EARTH MOVING equipment moves around the Lafayette's open-pit mining site in Rapu-Rapu, Albay. The firm is preparing for attacks by communist guerrillas who had declared war on mining in the country.

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Army bares NPA threat to attack mine firm

LEGAZPI CITY—THE PHILIPPINE Army in Bicol yesterday confirmed intelligence reports saying that the New People's Army (NPA) was planning to attack Lafayette Philippines Inc. to stop the controversial mining firm's operations in Rapu-Rapu town.

The firm operates an open-pit copper and zinc mine in the island-town.

Col. Muhammad Nur Askalani, commander of the 902nd Infantry Brigade based in Villahermosa, Daraga, Albay, said military officers had received the information from civilian sources and other intelligence units on the island.

NPA directive

Earlier, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) criticized President Macapagal-Arroyo's family for its control of the lucrative mining industry and ordered NPA rebels to attack and stop mining operations in the country.

Communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal announced a directive from the CPP to stop the operations of mining firms, mostly foreign corporations, in various parts of the country.

Defense shield

Askalani said that despite security threats authorities were confident that the military had enough forces in Rapu-Rapu to prevent any sabotage of the mining firm's operations.

Lafayette officials expressed alarm at the intelligence report, saying it shouldn't be ignored.

"The rebels could attack anytime," said one official, who asked that he not be identified for lack of authority to speak on the matter.

Lafayette representatives snubbed the invitation to the forum organized by the multisectoral Save Rapu-Rapu Alliance (Sara) in cooperation with the provincial government on Tuesday.

The forum was designed to discuss the environmental and socioeconomic impact of the mining activity in Rapu-Rapu.

Protest march

Sara proceeded with a protest march from the Bicol University in Daraga town to the Legazpi City seaport to demand a stop to Lafayette's operations.

Bishop Lucilo Quiambao of the Archdiocese of Legazpi, who was present in the forum, said his stand now against the mining issue had hardened after the government allowed the full resumption of the firm's operations.

He said he had asked the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines to write all congressmen and senators to help repeal or amend the Mining Act of 1995. The law, he said, was putting the country at a disadvantage.

Mining

Quiambao added that he would start a signature campaign throughout his diocese to build a stronger consensus against destructive mining.

John Concepcion, one of the conveners of Sara representing the militant Karapatan-Bikol, said large-scale mining was a form of human rights violation that the government should not take for granted.

"Large-scale mining violates the economic rights of the people since it threatens the livelihood of fishermen and farmers. It also infringes on our social rights since it destroys the environment," Concepcion said.

He added that it was the people who should benefit from the country's natural resources and not the foreign-owned giant mining firms. *Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Fund transfer delays Bicol schools repair

LEGAZPI CITY—A TOP education regional official said President Macapagal-Arroyo's order to transfer funds for the rehabilitation of school buildings from the Department of Education to the Department of Public Works and Highways might raise legal issues since the school principals had already conducted bidding for the projects.

DepEd regional director Celedonio Layon said the transfer of funds might mess up the agency's ongoing rehabilitation projects.

The problem cropped up after the President, during her visit to the Barangay Anislag Resettlement Site in Daraga, Albay, on Friday, publicly chided the DepEd for the slow rehabilitation of schools damaged by typhoons late last year.

Ms Arroyo cited reports from Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya that only seven percent of the rehabilitation projects of the DepEd under the Calamity Assistance Rehabilitation Effort (CARE) fund had been completed.

She gave instructions for the funds, formerly allotted to the DepEd, to be rechanneled to the DPWH as suggested by Albay Rep. Reno Lim (first district).

Accomplishment report

Layon, however, said it was not true that only seven percent of the projects had been implemented.

Furnishing the INQUIRER a copy of printed accomplishment figures, Layon said that in Albay alone, 42.44 percent of the rehabilitation of 485 public schools in the three congressional districts had been accomplished with a total funding of P368.3 million.

In a mobile phone interview, Education Secretary Jesli Lapus stressed that the CARE fund came from the World Bank and, therefore, its use is subject to the bank's requirements.

World Bank money

"A principal-led implementation is always faster compared to the regular school program of the DPWH, which is dependent on the efficiency of the congressmen to identify schools," he said.

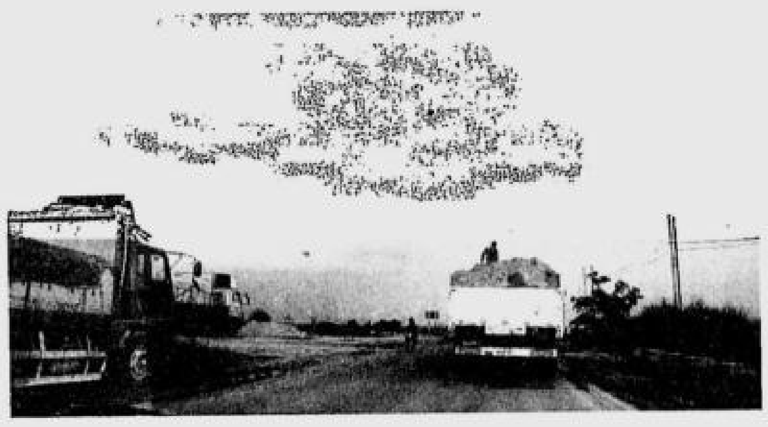
"In contrast, the DepEd can easily identify schools to be constructed depending on the school shortages per school," he added.

In any case, he added, the amounts involved in the rehabilitation of the schools that have been contracted can no longer be taken back or realigned.

A total of 2,238 schools in all six provinces in Bicol are being rehabilitated by the DepEd with a total special allotment release order of P1.2 billion from the P2-billion CARE fund.

A total of 6,562 classrooms have to be repaired, while 733 have to be constructed.

Ms Arroyo visited the Anislag Resettlement Site last week to distribute certificates of occupancy to 61 families from Barangay Binitayan who were displaced from their homes due to the series of typhoons last year. *Jaymee T. Gamil and Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*



TRUCKS leave the quarry sites to deliver sand straight to construction projects or retailers. Pampanga's quarry industry is bringing in funds for the administration of Gov. Eddie Panlilio.

TONETTE T. OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Towns get ₱7M as sharing of quarry income continues

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—SEVEN TOWNS and 27 villages in Pampanga received on Thursday at least P7.7 million as share from the P22.2 million in sand taxes collected by the administration of Gov. Eddie Panlilio from July 16 to Aug. 15.

This was the second amount given to sand-rich local governments since the release of P4,058,250 on July 20, bringing the total distributed shares to P11.8 million, according to provincial administrator Vivian Dabu.

Rightful share

The money represented the 30-percent and 40-percent shares, respectively, of towns and cities in the P300 tax that the provincial government collected on every truckload of sand.

Barangay Manibaug-Pasig in Porac alone got P1.4 million. The rest of the P7.7 million went to Bacolor, Floridablanca, Lubao, Mabalacat, Mexico, Porac and Sta. Rita towns and 26 villages there, an income report released by Panlilio's office showed.

Straight collection

Panlilio, a Catholic priest, said quarry taxes generated from July 2 to Aug. 29 reached P42.855 million. This was nearly double the P29.1 million collected during the time of former Gov. Mark Lapid, an INQUIRER review of income reports showed.

Lapid or his father, Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, has not issued any statement to explain the poor collection rate during their stints as governors in 12 years.

Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, the eldest son of President Macapagal-Arroyo, joined mayors during brief rites for the distribution of shares before the provincial development council convened at the capitol.

Pork guest

Arroyo said he came to the PDC to inform the council of projects funded by pork barrel so that they would avoid duplication.

He declined to comment on the quarry tax collection efforts of Panlilio, saying he was "not aware" of figures.

Panlilio said he would continue to target a collection of P300 million in a year. Current receipt payments at the provincial treasurer's office average P1 million daily.

Right target

The capitol gets 30 percent of the revenues. Half of the P300 tax goes to administrative and operational costs.

The Panlilio administration has employed 178 checkers and seven supervisors to regulate and monitor the multimillion-peso quarry industry previously suspected to be hampered by graft and other irregularities.

The salaries of the quarry industry workers were also increased recently to encourage them to report quarry tax collection honestly.

No investigation has yet been concluded on why the amount of quarry taxes fell during the tenure of the two Lapids as Pampanga governor. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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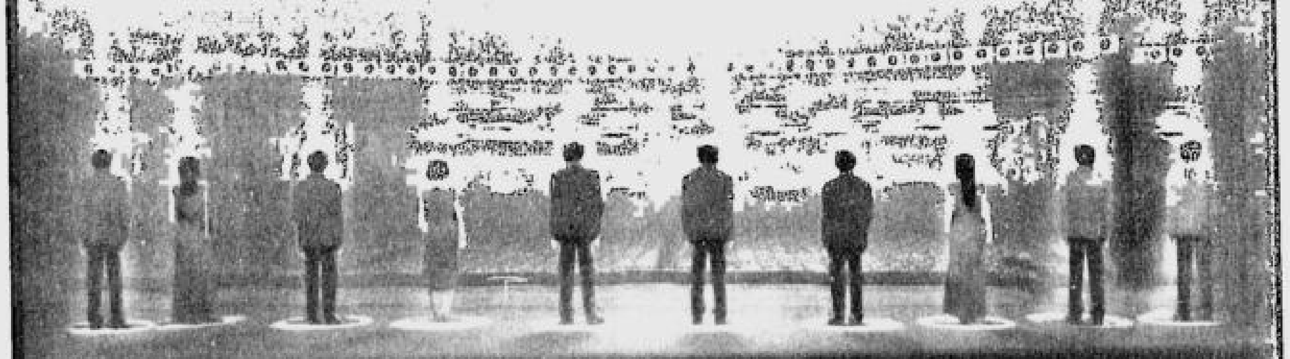

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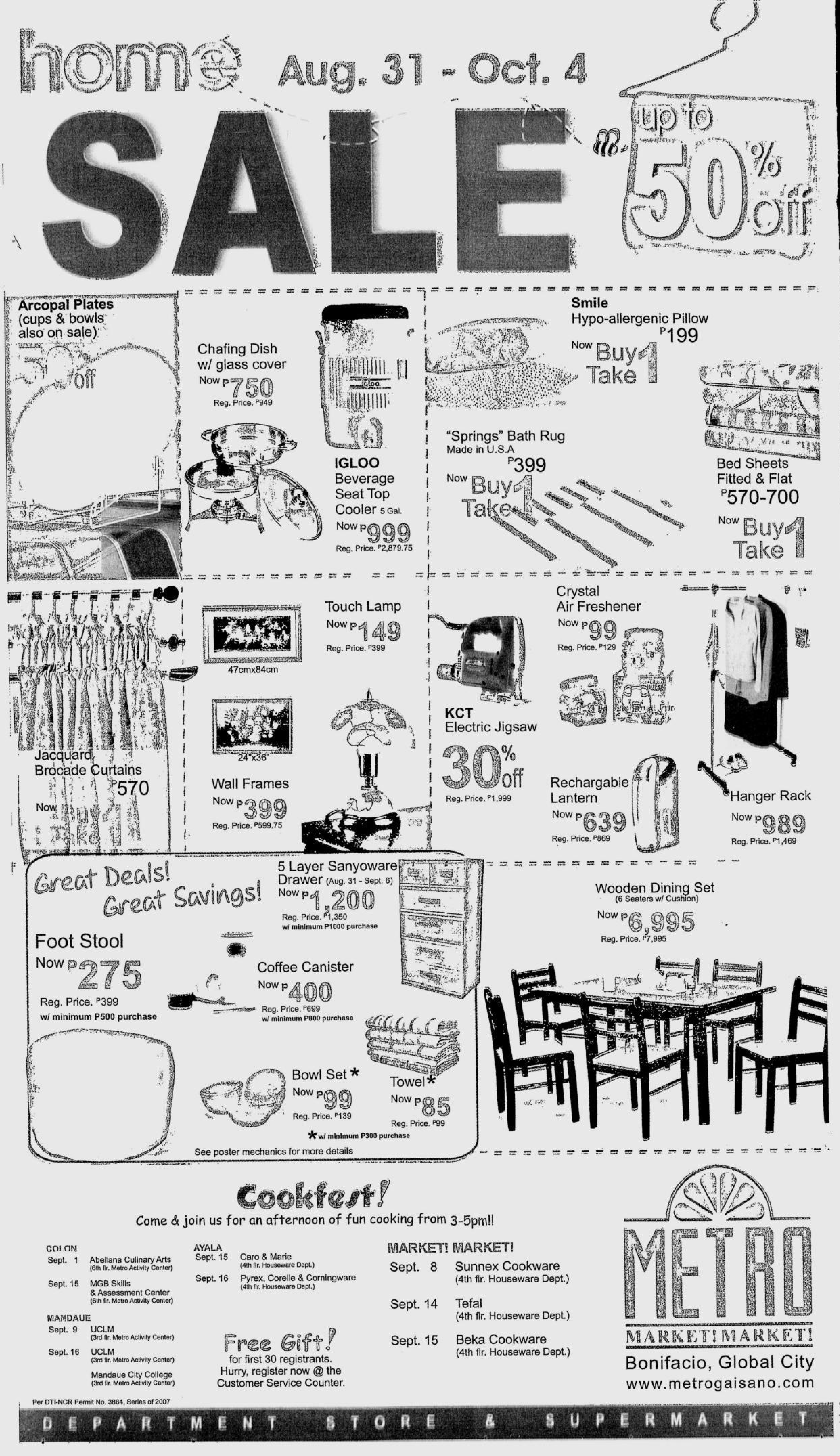

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No bail for Joma under Dutch law; faces court today

From page A1

on Friday decide whether Mr. Sison will stay in custody for another 14 days or release him. It's one or the other," De Bruin said.

Anita van de Haar, deputy chief of mission of the Dutch Embassy, said actual trial and the presentation of the case would commence after the 90-day period as the remand hearing was just preliminary.

Sison, 68, who has been staying in Utrecht, the Netherlands, since 1988, was arrested on Tuesday by Dutch police for allegedly ordering the execution of his former associates, Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara, in 2003 and 2004. A complaint of murder has been jointly filed by the widows of the victims.

The Philippines has braced for fallout from the arrest, with the military going on red alert as Sison's supporters vowed to intensify their insurgency. Leftist groups worried about a possible crackdown and all-out war.

Sison, who has been serving as political consultant to the CPP-led National Democratic Front (NDF) in on-and-off peace talks with the Philippine government, is being held at the Scheveningen prison in The Hague. NDF chief negotiator Luis Jalandoni described the place as "formerly used by the Nazis for detaining Dutch resistance fighters."

'Good spirits'

On his third day of detention, Sison remained in "good spirits" and was allowed by his guards to take his medicine with him, his Filipino lawyer said, quoting a text message sent by Jalandoni.

Under Dutch law, Sison's initial appearance before a judge was required three to six days after his arrest.

Vornis refused to comment on the facts of the case, including the possible role of the Philippine government and authorities in bringing Sison to the Dutch justice system.

"I'm sorry to disappoint you but I'm not going to engage in a conversation on any role of the Philippines," he said.

"The Dutch legal system is such that it is equally applicable to all people within the Netherlands. We're looking at the criminal code. Even if the charges were committed in the Philippines, it's very much a Dutch criminal proceeding," he stressed.

Strategy for arrest

Sison was arrested when he was invited by the Dutch police for questioning.

"For sure, it was a strategy because the police didn't want to raid his house and arrest him there. They thought it would be more careful to invite him to the police station and arrest him there," De Bruin told a television network.

He said the Dutch police investigation started in 2006.

Sison had filed for political asylum in the 1980s but his request was rejected by the Dutch authorities. They ruled, however, that he could not be sent back to the Philippines because his life would be in danger there.

Since 2002, Sison and the CPP have been on the US and European Union (EU) lists of people and organizations aiding terrorism. His assets have been frozen and the Dutch state also blocked his pension.

Although Sison won one legal challenge against the listing, his name reappeared on a subsequent review of the list. To get that lifted he will have to file a separate legal challenge.

Defense plan

His Filipino lawyers and supporters appear to be treading on unfamiliar legal territory in their bid to gain even provisional freedom for him in the Netherlands.

No bail

"There is no bail under the Dutch legal system, but in general principle there are other ways to ask the court to grant him temporary liberty," lawyer Edre Olalia told the INQUIRER, quoting his counterpart attorneys handling the case.

When he appears before a judge commissioner today, Sison will be invoking a recent Philippine jurisprudence, among others, to get himself off a non-bailable case of inciting to murders and avoid life imprisonment, his lawyers said.

Rebellion case ruling

They are banking on a June 2007 Supreme Court ruling dismissing a rebellion case against Sison and 50 others to quash the charges he is facing in the Netherlands. The rebellion case includes the allegations of murder that Sison is now accused of inciting.

"We believe this will be useful in convincing the Netherlands court that the evidence is insufficient to link Joma Sison to the killings," lawyer Romeo Capulong said in a phone interview. Sison's Filipino defense panel, headed by Capulong, was set to transmit a legal memorandum on the ruling to his European lawyers last night.

To invoke SC ruling

Capulong said Sison and his European lawyers could invoke the Supreme Court decision for his defense, and hoped that the court would "take this into account."

"Any foreign court should take into account the fact that the case against Sison had been rejected and repudiated, and should likewise be rejected and repudiated in The Netherlands," he said.

By dismissing the case on June 1, the Supreme Court declared the evidence against Sison and his co-accused as insufficient to establish probable cause to warrant the filing of a case of rebellion, according to Capulong. The pieces of evidence included the affidavits of the widows of Kintanar and Tabara, and 390 other documents, he said.

Recycled evidence

"The evidence can no longer be recycled in The Netherlands or anywhere else against Sison because the Supreme Court said so," Capulong said. "This is the judgment of the Supreme Court."

But even assuming that the murders were committed in furtherance of rebellion, these could not be made a subject matter of a separate prosecution for common crimes, Capulong asserted.

"The acts allegedly committed in furtherance of rebellion are deemed absorbed in rebellion," he said, citing the Doctrine of Political Offense. "So under the Philippine law, Sison can only be prosecuted for rebellion, but not for murder."

Sison's arrest has all but justified the expected escalation of hostilities between the government and communist rebels, Jalandoni said in a strongly worded statement. It provoked, if not justified, the armed conflict considering that Sison was the NDF peace panel's chief political consultant, he said.

"This abominable action taken by the Dutch and Philippine governments against Professor Sison ... is a casus belli and will practically kill the GRP-NDF peace negotiations," Jalandoni said.

Jalandoni alleged that the Arroyo administration had conspired with Dutch authorities to arrest Sison as a way of forcing the NDF into "capitulation."

The NDF had earlier rejected the government's invitation to resume peace talks stalled in 2004 under the condition of a nationwide ceasefire. Instead, it wanted the government to first settle "prejudicial questions" such as the rampant extrajudicial killings, inclusion of the communist movement in the US and EU lists of terrorists, and indemnification of human rights victims.

'Weakened' NPA

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday admitted that the inclusion of Sison on the US and EU lists had prompted the Dutch government to go after the criminal liabilities of the communist founder.

"It helped because why will the Dutch government pursue the case? How did they develop the case? It is their own initiative. The Netherlands is very powerful, stable," said Ermita.

He also said that the arrest of Sison had rendered "weak" the more than 7,000 members of the New People's Army although they "continued to be a major threat to our national security."

Congress' inquiry

Two militant lawmakers yesterday called for a congressional inquiry into the arrest, its impact on other Filipinos in political exile, and the Arroyo administration's alleged role in the incident.

"The arrest of Professor Sison and the probable violations of his and his colleagues' rights as political refugees or exiles is a cause for concern to many other Filipinos who, from the time of the Marcos dictatorship to the present, have fled the country to seek shelter from political persecution and threat of state-perpetrated arbitrary arrests, torture, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances," according to the resolution filed by Bayan Muna Representatives Satur Ocampo and Teodoro Casiño. *With reports from Christian V. Esguerra, Michael Lim Ubac, AP*

Rally for Joma

POLICE YESTERDAY USED truncheons and shields to beat back some 100 left-wing activists who tried to march to the Dutch Embassy to protest the arrest of Jose Ma. Sison.

Rally organizers said their affiliates in the United States, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and Europe launched similar protests. They also called for a boycott of Dutch products until Sison is released from jail.

Senior Supt. Jaime Calungsod, the district police chief, said the rally had no permit. He ordered police to arrest organizers and confiscate their streamers and other rally materials. Negotiations averted arrests, but Calungsod said police will pursue illegal assembly charges.

'PNP witness in jail, couldn't have given orders to surveil Jonas'

From page A1

de Guzman.

On Tuesday, the Philippine National Police (PNP) presented Lipio and two other confessed guerrillas of the communist New People's Army (NPA) to reporters. The three claimed they witnessed the abduction of Burgos on April 28 at the Ever Gotesco Mall at Fairview in Quezon City.

Lipio said the 36-year-old Burgos, son of the late publisher and press freedom icon Jose "Joe" Burgos, was an NPA political and intelligence officer in Bulacan.

Lipio said De Guzman had ordered him to tail Burgos because he was suspected of pilfering communist funds and was an agent of the military. He said he recognized two of the four people who seized Burgos, saying they were NPA members on a mission to purge him.

Citing information from the human rights group Karapatan, Edita Burgos said that Lipio was among seven members of the transport group Piston arrested on July 3, 2006, in Angeles City by the military and police and was later tortured.

Among those involved in the case were elements of the 69th Infantry Battalion and the 56th Infantry Battalion. The 56th IB had custody of an impounded vehicle whose license plate was used in the kidnapping of Burgos.

Six of those arrested with Lipio were subsequently released, but nothing was heard from Lipio until he was produced by the PNP before reporters on Tuesday.

De Guzman's arrest

Edita said she had learned that De Guzman was arrested in Norzagaray, Bulacan, in May 2006 for his alleged involvement in the killings of communist leaders Arturo Tabara and Romulo Kintanar.

Karapatan's Marie Hilao Enriquez said that if De Guzman had been arrested since last year, he was unlikely to have ordered Jonas' shadowing. She said having been arrested for murder, De Guzman was expected to be under detention.

"He was inside the jail so how could he have ordered that? Does this mean they were letting him go out?" Enriquez said.

She added that the authorities were trying to make fools of the people.

Enriquez also said Karapatan had tried to speak with Lipio's family after the release of his six companions, but was told not to get in touch again.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?
Edita Burgos, whose son Jonas has become the face of the more than 180 enforced disappearances under the Arroyo administration, leads Thursday's rally at Liwasang Bonifacio to mark the International Day of the Disappeared. "We will be a thorn on their side. We will not go away, and they must produce my son Jonas," Burgos told her fellow seekers of missing loved ones. She promised that the Burgoses would keep fighting until justice is served her son and the sons and daughters, fathers and mothers of the missing. REM ZAMORA

Habeas corpus petition

Assistant Solicitor General Amparo Tang said it was possible the government would use the three alleged NPA members presented by the police as witnesses in the petition for the writ of habeas corpus for Jonas' release.

But Tang added that it would depend on the strength of the evidence of Edita's camp since the latter has the burden of proving there was military involvement in the abduction of Burgos, an agriculturist-activist who had trained peasants in organic farming.

Tang noted that the testimony yesterday of Supt. Jonnel Estomo, chief of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, showed that Mauro Mudlong, owner of Plate No. TAB-194 before it was confiscated by the military, was an NPA sympathizer.

"It was possible it was Mudlong himself who stole the plates," Tang said.

Administrative charges

Estomo told the court when he learned that the plate had been lost, he recommended that military personnel responsible for it be administratively charged. But he added that he could not pinpoint any specific personnel.

He also recommended that charges be filed against employees of Hapag Kainan for being uncooperative in his probe. Jonas was kidnapped from the restaurant.

Estomo suggested the filing of charges against Mudlong for also failing to appear during his investigation.

George San Mateo, Piston secretary general, said Lipio, a provincial coordinator for the organization, was "being used by the military to mislead everyone on the Burgos abduction."

But the Army spokesperson, Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres, said the statements of Lipio and his two companions were "a redeeming development" that gave credence to the AFP theory that communists were involved in the abduction of Burgos. *With reports from Alcuin Papa and Christine O. Avendaño*

SC drafting writ of habeas data invoking right to truth

From page A1

martial law, precisely gave the high court the power to stop human rights violations by handing down rules to protect constitutional rights.

He said its framers "were gifted with a foresight that allowed them to see that the dark forces of human rights violators would revisit our country and wreak havoc on the rights of our people."

Puno said the new writ was "a remedy to protect the image, privacy, and honor of an individual and to enforce the freedom of information of a person."

Activist role

The new writ further gives substance to the Puno court's activist role amid stepped up charges the military has been engaging in extrajudicial executions and snatching suspected subversives.

The Supreme Court last month hosted a summit on extrajudicial executions and enforced disappearances in a bid to provide relief to families of victims in the face of rebuffs from the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

In the latest such incident, the AFP provost marshal snubbed a hearing on Aug. 13 of the Court of Appeals that had summoned him to bring documents on an investigation conducted in connection with the disappearance of leftist agriculturist Jonas Burgos.

Writ of amparo

Burgos' mother has failed to get the military's investigation report on the loss of a plate number in its custody that was later seen in the vehicle her son's abductors used. The AFP top brass has refused to divulge the report, claiming it was confidential.

Puno announced earlier that the Supreme Court was also working on what he called the writ of amparo—the Spanish for protection. It will strip military officials of a pretext not to appear in judicial proceedings by simply issuing denials on cases of disappearances or extrajudicial executions.

Together with the writ of habeas corpus designed to force the government to produce persons in its custody before the tribunal, the writ of habeas data and the writ of amparo will further help those looking for missing loved ones.

"After the writ of amparo, we are also contemplating on promulgating rules to govern the issuance of the writ of habeas data, the remedy that will give reality to the right to truth of our people," Puno said.

"The exercise of the right to truth will expose all the falsehoods, all the fabrications that public authorities and private persons usually put up to evade responsibility in cases of extralegal killings and involuntary disappearances," he said.

Latin American experience

Puno said the relatively new writ of habeas data is available in Latin American countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru, Argentina and Ecuador and has been important to families of the disappeared.

"It gives them the right to truth in their search for the fate and whereabouts of those who have disappeared as a result of the illegal acts and omissions of public authorities," said Puno.

He noted that a landmark ruling of the Argentina Supreme Court stated that the writ could be used by families of the deceased to demand access to police and military files that would otherwise be kept from them.

In the Philippines, Puno said there was a need to resort to new remedies because of the failure of authorities to stop human rights violations, a matter that has drawn international concern.

'Bulging number of victims'

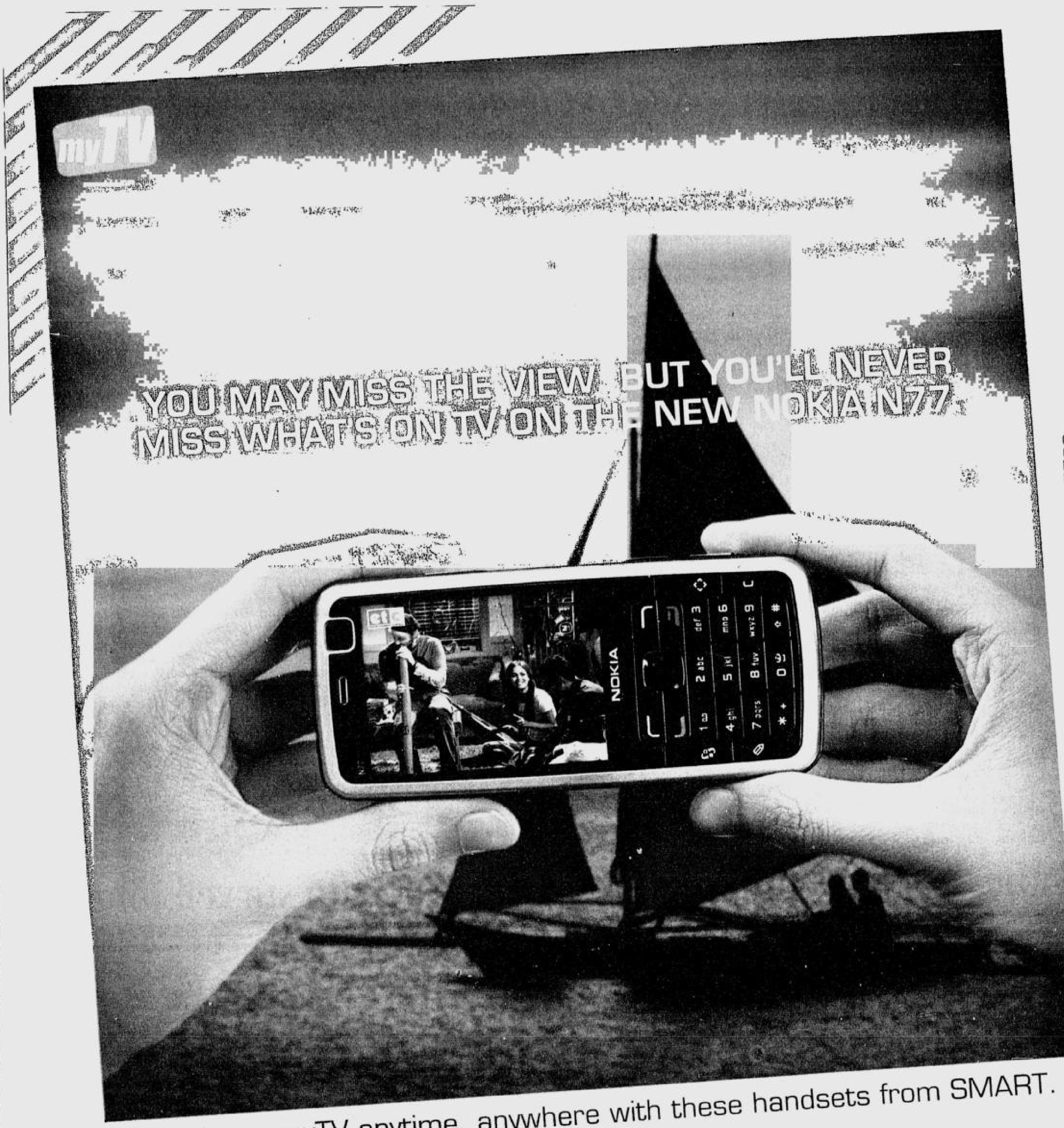
"Looking at our record with the most hospitable eye, the conclusion will not be kind to our authorities," he said. "This bulging number of victims of human rights violations and the failure to bring the perpetrators to swift justice have brought to use what observers call a culture of impunity."

Fidelity to human rights

"We are hopeful that the three writs ... which solved the problem of extralegal killings and enforced disappearances in Latin American countries under military dictatorships will serve the same purpose in the Philippines," he said.

The writs are the judiciary's means of demonstrating its gratitude to the people for their trust and confidence, and Puno said that in protecting their life and liberty, "there will be no dissonance between rhetoric and reality in our courts of justice."

"We will demonstrate this fidelity to the human rights of the Filipino, not with a brittle wishbone, but with an unending backbone," he added.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DID YOU KNOW

TODAY is the 100th birth anniversary of Ramon Magsaysay, third President of the Philippine Republic. "The Guy," as supporters called him, was born in Iba, Zambales. Before being elected President, he became representative of Zambales and secretary of national defense. Magsaysay died in 1957 in a plane crash.

In Metro Manila, there are three public schools named in his honor: Ramon Magsaysay Elementary School in Quezon City, Ramon Magsaysay High School in Manila and Ramon Magsaysay High School in Cubao, Quezon City.

Cyril Bonabente, Inquirer Research

Death puts end to short, happy life of Cris

UP studes to hold indignation rally today to protest violence on campus

By Jeannette I. Andrade

TWENTY-YEAR-OLD CRIS ANthony Mendez was a regular guy who "wanted to meet everyone."

Picking up a line from a Tagalog movie, he would describe himself as "*Parang karinderia na bukas sa lahat ng gustong kumain.*"

His death, suspected to be the result of hazing, cut short his Friendster run. Mendez' Friendster account received 59 messages from friends expressing outrage and sadness at the fate of the senior University of the Philippines (UP) public administration student, the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG) representative to the UP student council.

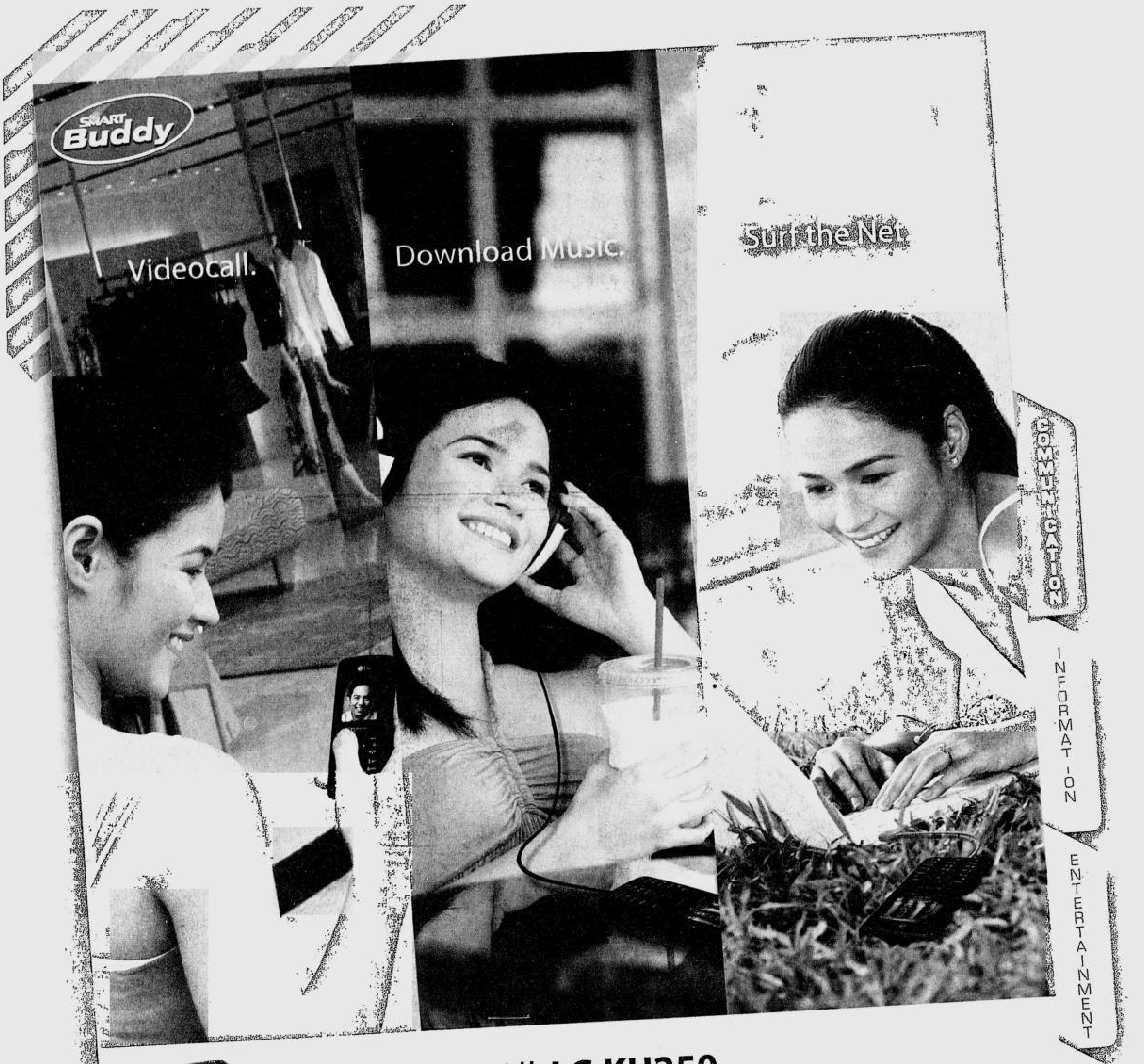
NCPAG Dean Alex Brillantes said they would hold a rally 10 a.m. today at the college to express outrage and grief at Mendez's violent death. Students will march towards the Palma Hall to join a similar activity organized by the UP Student Council.

In Mendez's Friendster account, one message asked why he had to join a fraternity. The comment posted on Wednesday offered prayers for the deceased and thanked him for his advice.

One message recalled Mendez's self-description in his Friendster account: "Adjectives are not enough."

Another message read: "I have known you (Cris) for a very short time but I have seen how fast yet simple and happy your life has been. I am very happy to know someone like you, so brave, so responsible, so

TITLE/A0



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Tourism plan for Intramuros in the works

By Jerome Aning

MORE TOURISTS ARE EXPECTED to visit Intramuros, one of Manila's enduring attractions, following the closure of entertainment establishments in the city's Baywalk promenade area.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said he would work closely with Mayor Alfredo Lim in developing Intramuros, site of historic landmarks as Fort Santiago and San Agustin Church, as an alternative destination.

Durano said he respected Lim's decision closing restaurants and bars lining the Roxas Boulevard strip because of peace and order concerns.

"Clearly, Mayor Lim has his own reasons for closing them, and his predecessor, Mayor Lito Atienza, had his reasons in putting them up as well. Every leader has his own vision and priorities," Durano told reporters.

The Secretary described the public reaction to the closure of the Baywalk shops as "generational. The seniors are glad because there's no more traffic while the younger ones say they are sad because they had nowhere to go now."

Durano said other entertainment sites in Malate and Ermita districts were seeing the return of patrons who used to frequent Baywalk.

"We appreciate Mayor Lim's drive for peace and order because it's making Intramuros more secure for the thousands of tourists that go there every year," said Durano.

Intramuros, also called Walled City, is under the supervision of the DOT attached agency, Intramuros Administration. The agency is eyeing a revival of the Muelle de Rio entertainment area, which would be a part of the Pasig riverbank boardwalk. Another DOT agency, the Philippine Tourism Authority, is constructing a sports complex outside the walls.

Death puts end to short …

From page A23

full of ideas and so in love (with) everything that you do."

But justice might have to wait as the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (QCPD-CIDU) claimed the doctor who reportedly brought the student to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) had gone into hiding.

Dr. Francisco Cruz, deputy chief of the hospital's department of ophthalmology, had reportedly gone on leave and left his home at Phase 3, Congressional Village, Project 8, Quezon City.

Chief Insp. Lino Banaag of the QCPD-CIDU told the INQUIRER they could not find the doctor who could have turned off his cellular phone. Banaag said a relative of the doctor told him that after taking Mendez to the VMMC, he reported the incident to the QCPD Baler Station 2, but was told to call the UP Police. "But that cannot be true. Had he (Dr. Cruz) really done so, the Baler station would have called the QCPD-CIDU because someone is dead," Banaag said.

MENDEZ

He also scored the VMMC for not reporting immediately the incident to the QCPD-CIDU. He said the request for an autopsy should have come from the police. A source told the INQUIRER there were unconfirmed reports that Dr. Cruz had a son studying at UP, who was a member of a fraternity. The victim was reportedly recruited to join the Sigma Rho fraternity. Calls made by the Inquirer to the fraternity's Council of Elders leadership for comment, were not answered.

Brillantes told the INQUIRER they could not convince students to talk about the incident.

Until yesterday, members of the fraternity believed to have knowledge of how Mendez died, remained silent. A student, requesting anonymity, told the INQUIRER the fraternity met Wednesday evening at an undisclosed location presumably to discuss the incident.

Libel charges dropped vs Coalition 349 leader

By DJ Yap

THE MAN WHO WAGED A protracted battle against soft drink giant Pepsi Cola over the 349 "Number Fever" fiasco of 1992 was acquitted yesterday of the libel case filed against him 12 years ago.

In acquitting Vic del Fierro Jr., president of the Coalition for Consumer Protection and Welfare Inc., a Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC) judge said it was "reasonable" for the accused to believe Pepsi defrauded the public.

"(The) Court is satisfied that the accused had some ground to believe his statements to be true at the time he made them," Judge Cesar Santamaria said in his 12-page decision.

"Surely, if the Senate Committee on Trade and Commerce, and several thousand other persons believed that private complainant and/or its local franchisee are guilty of gross negligence, deluding or misleading the public … then it is reasonable for the accused to believe the same to be true," said Santamaria, of Makati City RTC Branch 145.

Del Fierro was not in court when the decision was read. He appeared later in the lobby of the courthouse where he was congratulated by about a dozen supporters.

"This only shows that we have all the evidence. If we are only given the chance to have our day in court, we're going to win," he told the INQUIRER.

The libel case stemmed from a pamphlet, "Coalition 349 Question and Answer, a Primer on the World's Biggest Marketing Disaster," and a letter del Fierro sent Rafael Buenaventura, then president of the Philippine Commercial International Bank.

In the pamphlet, Del Fierro called the 349 controversy involving a contest sponsored by Pepsi "one of the worst large-scale marketing scams in the annals of human history."

He alleged in his letter to Buenaventura that "law enforcement officers are being bribed and induced to spy, frame up, and intimidate leaders of 349 groups standing for our exploited poor."

Del Fierro said he still had another pending libel case lodged by Pepsi that had nothing to do with the 349 case.

METROBRIEFS

Driver set free

A DRIVER-messenger earlier arrested as a suspect in the extortion case involving two former Pasay City officials has been ordered released because of insufficient evidence. Mario Siocson, who was nabbed by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation, has been ordered released by Pasay City chief inquest prosecutor Leopoldo Luz. In his order, Luz instructed the NBI to release Siocson for further investigation of the extortion charges filed against him, former Pasay City administrator Santiago Quial and former Business Permits and Licensing Office chair Crisostomo Beltran.

Julie M. Aurelio

Tribute to teachers

THE DIWA Diwa Learning Systems (DLSI) and Bato Balani Foundation (BBFI) say thank you to the nation's teachers on Sept. 1 at the Araneta Coliseum. "A Tribute to Teachers" now on its fifth year, is the country's biggest gathering of teachers, with more than 12,000 teachers expected to attend the event. Highlighting the event is the announcement of this year's "The Many Faces of the Teacher" honorees. For more information, log on to www.diwa.ph or call 893-8501 and 892-5462 or email tributetoteachers@diwamail.com.

Loanzon interment

ELISEA Vasquez Loanzon, a retired Manila Health Department employee, and wife of the late Judge Jesus Loanzon, will be buried on Sept. 1 at the Loyola Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City after the 8:30 Mass at Sto. Domingo church in Quezon City where she lies in state. Ms Loanzon died in Portland, Oregon on Aug. 17. She is survived by her children Jeanette Isabelle, Alvin and Marichu (deceased), Priscilla, Victoria, Ma. Esther, Cecilia Barbara, Jesse Jr. and Marci Ann, Ana Fe Linda, Eugene, Ma. Cristina, and Emmeline and Michael Gilbert.

500 Taguig City children to enjoy benefits of pilot welfare project

By Julie M. Aurelio

SOME 500 CHILDREN FROM five barangay in Taguig City will be covered by the local government's three-year Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) pilot program.

Undertaken in collaboration with the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), the program seeks to promote children's rights in Taguig and is expected to address their need for education, nutrition and health care.

On Tuesday, city Mayor Freddie Tiñga signed the ECCD memorandum of agreement with CWC deputy executive director Elena Caraballo and regional director Thelsa Biolena. Both parties agreed to fast track the program and share resources for its implementation.

Chosen as pilot barangay were Bagumbayan, Signal Village, Western Bicutan, Hagonoy and Napindan.

"In this program, we expect that children will not only enjoy proper care but also proper guidance and direction so that when they become adults like us, they will likewise provide care and protection to the community," Tiñga said.

Caraballo expressed her appreciation for the city government's initiatives in the promotion and protection of children's welfare.

"I congratulate the city government for having reached this far in the implementation of the ECCD program. Having secured proper funding through this agreement, we can now rest assured that ECCD will be a success in Taguig," she said.

Vice Mayor George Elias said the ECCD plan would not only benefit children, but their parents as well.

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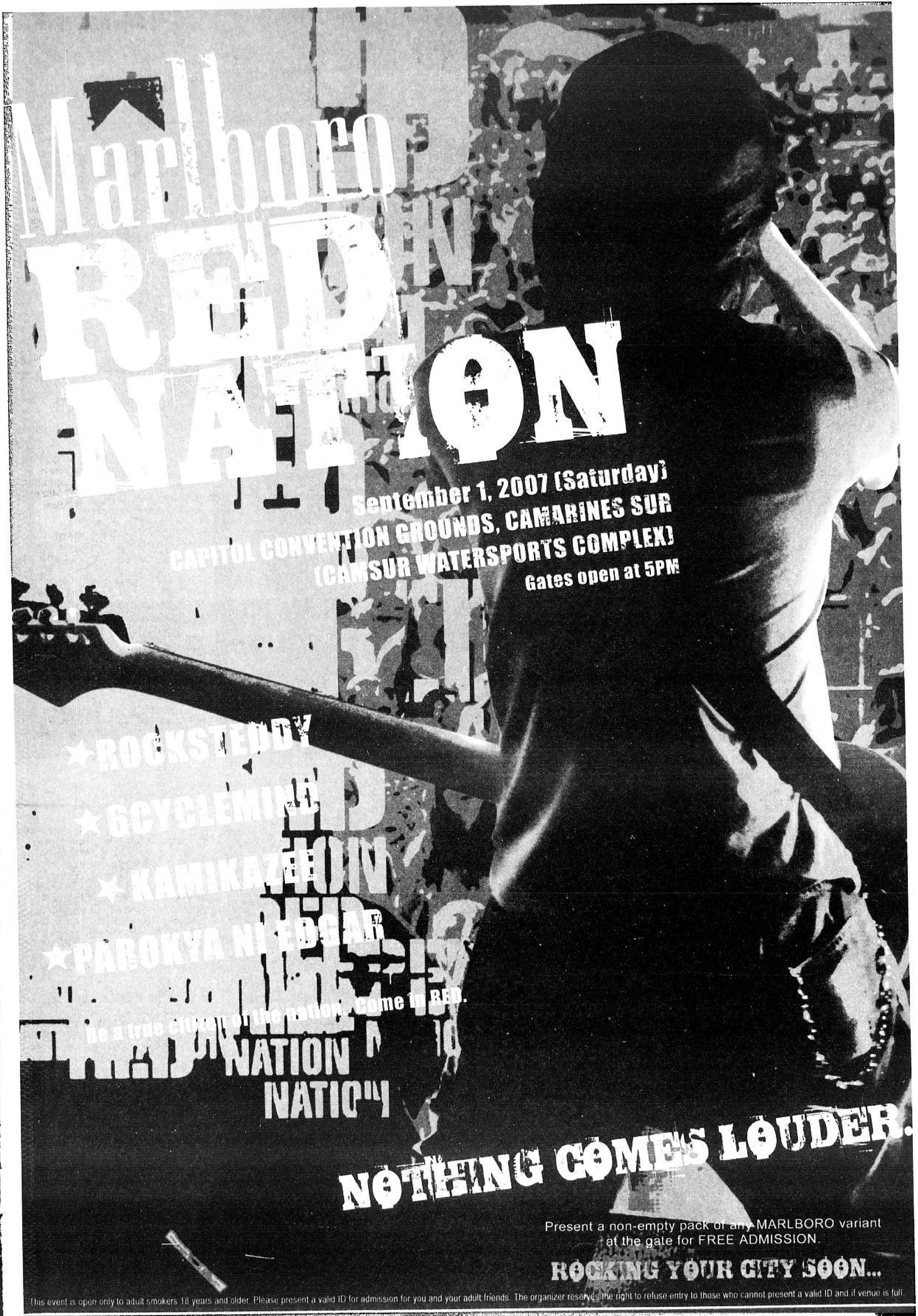

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Sadr orders halt to attacks on US troops

SHIITE cleric Moqtada al-Sadr AFP

NAJAF, IRAQ—RADICAL IRAQI CLERIC MOQTADA al-Sadr ordered his dreaded Shiite militia on Wednesday to stop attacks on US-led forces as part of a six-month suspension of the militant group's activities.

The order came after fierce firefights left at least 52 people dead in the Shiite shrine city of Karbala on Tuesday in violence witnesses said involved policemen and suspected fighters from Sadr's Mahdi Army militia.

Sadr aides have denied any involvement in the fighting that sent hundreds of thousands of pilgrims fleeing from Karbala and led Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki to slap an indefinite curfew on the city.

"I direct the Mahdi Army to suspend all its activities for six months until it is restructured in a way that helps honor the principles for which it is formed," Sadr said in a statement issued by his office in the city of Najaf.

Sheikh Ahmed al-Shaibani, a Sadr aide who led a bloody rebellion against US forces in Najaf in 2004, said the suspension included a ban on any attacks on US-led forces.

"The suspension means that the Mahdi Army will stop all armed activities against the occupiers or any other groups," he said. "The aim is to reorganize the militia but not to dismantle it. It is also an effort to root out the rogue elements."

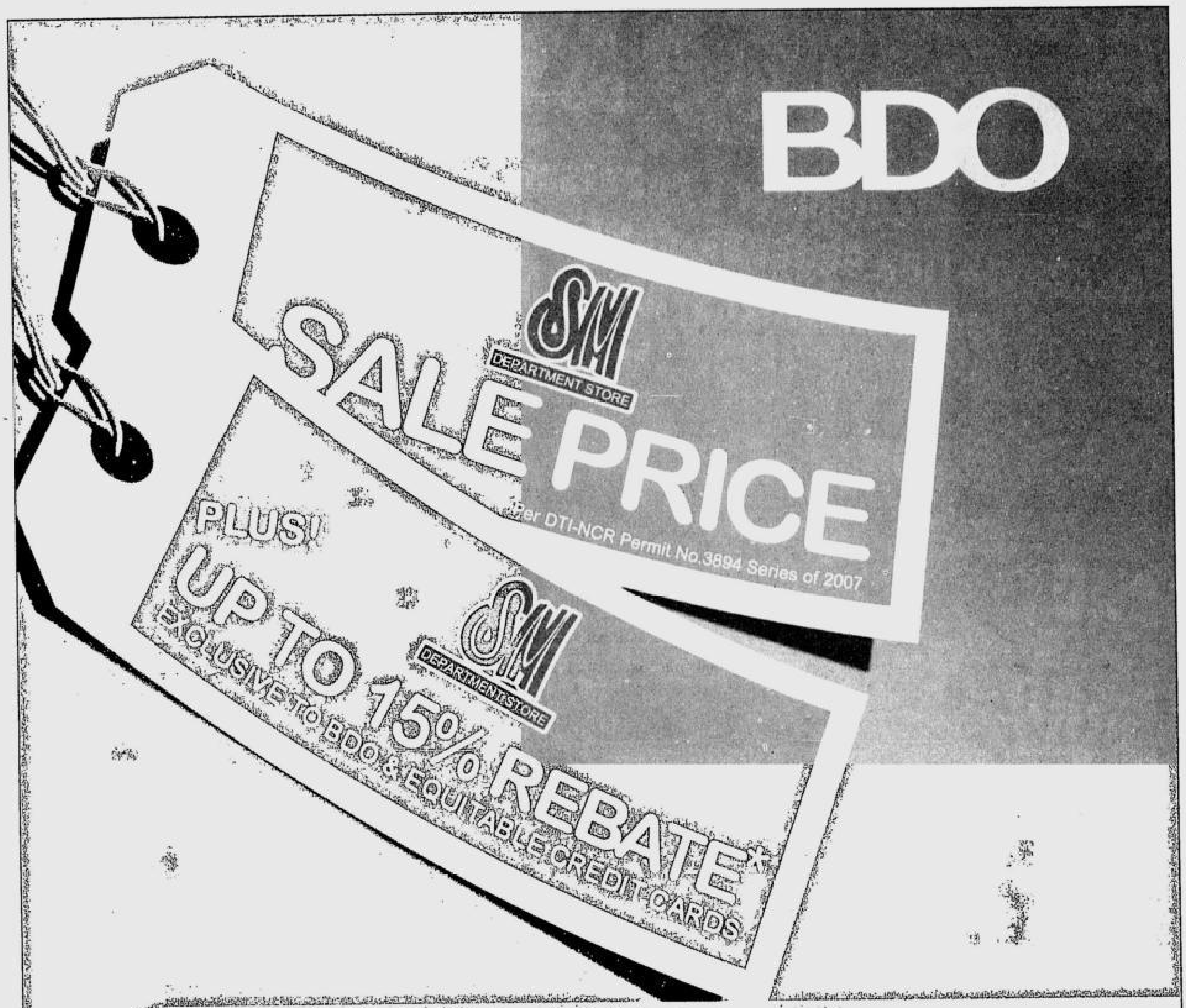
The thousands-strong Mahdi Army has been accused in the death-squad killings of Sunni Arabs since a brutal sectarian conflict broke out in February 2006.

In December, the Pentagon identified the militia as the biggest threat to stability in the war-ravaged country, even ahead of al-Qaida in Iraq, the local affiliate of Osama bin Laden's network.

Sadr responded by dropping out of sight and ordering his followers not to resist a joint US-Iraqi crackdown to restore stability to Baghdad, the epicenter of the communal bloodletting.

Most of his fighters are reported to have disappeared to avoid the military crackdown and taken shelter in the Shiite south of the country.

The militia has also suffered from allegations of being involved in clashes with rival Shiite militias, particularly the Badr Corps. That is the military wing linked to the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council, the party led by powerful politician Abdel Aziz al-Hakim. *AFP*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WORLDBRIEFS

Taliban free 12 Korean captives

GHAZNI—The Taliban freed 12 of their 19 South Korean captives on Wednesday as the wrenching six-week hostage crisis in Afghanistan neared resolution. The Islamic extremist movement handed over 10 women and two men to tribal elders in three separate releases several hours apart outside the central town of Ghazni. The aid workers were then driven to safety in Red Cross vehicles. The freed hostages were among 23 Christian aid workers kidnapped by Taliban militants on July 19. Two male captives were executed by their captors and two female hostages were freed earlier this month.

AFP

Solons urge US senator to quit

CRAIG REUTERS

WASHINGTON—Pressure for Sen. Larry Craig to resign mounted within his own party on Wednesday, two days after disclosures the Republican lawmaker pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct in a men's toilet at an airport. Republican presidential contender John McCain, an Arizona senator, told CNN the incident was "disgraceful" and added, "When you plead guilty to a crime, you shouldn't serve." Other Republican lawmakers echoed McCain's call, while Senate Republican leaders asked Craig, 62, a third-term senator from Idaho, to step down temporarily from his major committee assignments. A White House spokesperson said, "We are disappointed in the matter." Craig pleaded guilty earlier this month to a misdemeanor charge of disorderly conduct after his arrest in June in an undercover sting operation at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport where police were targeting lewd behavior in the men's toilet. Craig, a vocal opponent of gay rights, delivered a statement in Idaho on Tuesday that he was not a homosexual and insisted he had done nothing wrong.

Reuters

Greece fires 'under control'

ATHENS—Forest fires which began tearing through Greece a week ago are under control, firefighters said, as villagers whose homes and land were engulfed by flames began counting the cost. Firefighters said they had succeeded in limiting the fiercest remaining fires to several areas of the southern Peloponnese peninsula, where most of the 63 victims from this national disaster have lost their lives since Aug. 24. Blazes in the other main trouble spot, Evia island north of Athens, were reducing in intensity as night fell on Wednesday. Hot winds that have been fanning the flames dropped, but firefighters warned fires could rekindle if the winds picked up. As the blazes were gradually extinguished, angry Greeks asked how they had been allowed to wreak such widespread destruction. The government has blamed arsonists and arrested more than 30 people—many Greeks believe fires were started in parched forests to clear land for unauthorized construction.

AFP

Slow action in US massacre

CHO AFP

WASHINGTON—Virginia Tech was too slow to inform staff and students about a shooting incident in April that rapidly spiraled into the bloodiest campus massacre in US history, an investigation concluded Wednesday. The probe by the US state of Virginia pointed to errors by university police and officials in the immediate aftermath of an early morning shooting of two students on April 16 by mentally disturbed gunman Seung-Hui Cho. Within hours of the first deadly shootings in the West Ambler Johnston residence hall, 23-year-old Cho went on to massacre 30 students and faculty inside another building before killing himself. "Senior university administrators ... failed to issue an all-campus notification about the West Ambler Johnston killings until almost two hours had elapsed," the report said.

AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE
Fernando, Ababa share 54-hole lead /A28

SPORTS

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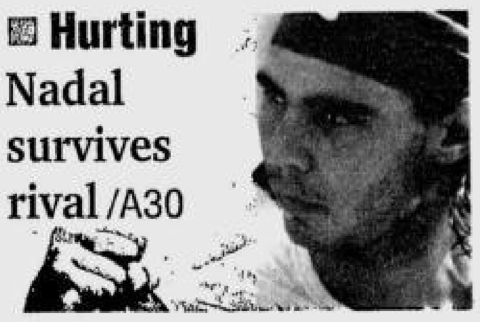
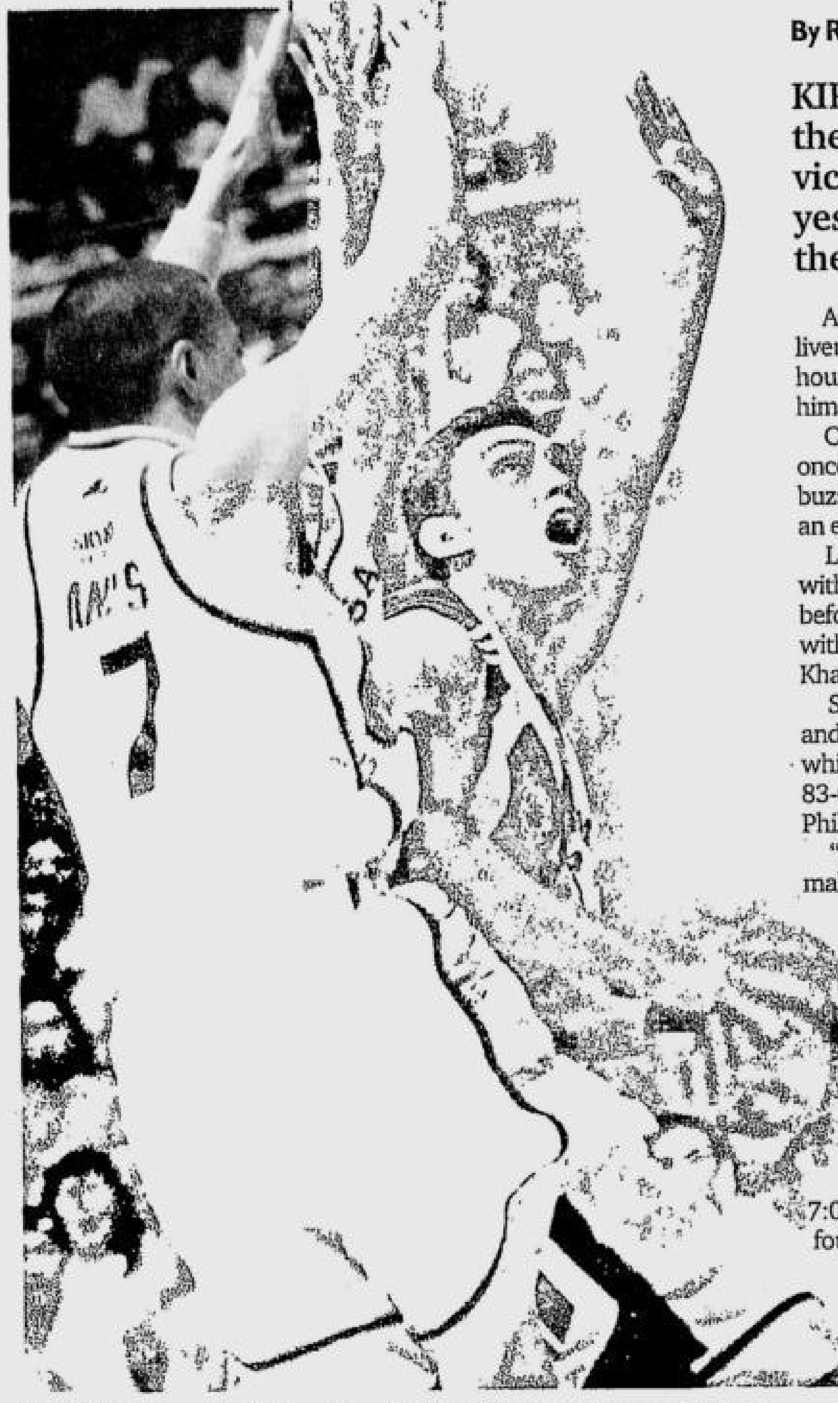
Hurting Nadal survives rival /A30



Long lifts Eagles past Tigers



ATENEO slotman Ford Arao fakes off UST's Mark Canlas and Jervy Cruz (partly hidden) during yesterday's game at the Big Dome. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Romina S. Austria

KIRK LONG WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO TAKE THE SHOT BUT the American rookie took the risk and gave Ateneo a 72-71 victory over defending champion University of Santo Tomas yesterday in the 70th UAAP men's basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

Ateneo's final play called for Chris Tiu to deliver the final basket, but with the Tigers hounding the Eagles' point guard, Long found himself with the ball in the final three seconds.

Challenged by Jervy Cruz, Long dribbled once and sank the long jumper just as the final buzzer sounded, giving Ateneo the thriller of an escape and solo third place at 6-4.

Long had earlier put Ateneo on top, 70-69, with a free throw, time down to 31.3 seconds, before the Tigers wrested the lead at 71-70 with 19.3 seconds to play on a short stab by Khasim Mirza.

Santo Tomas dropped into a tie for fourth and fifth places with Far Eastern University, which strengthened its semifinal bid with an 83-61 thrashing of luckless University of the Philippines in the second game.

"He [Long] was challenged but was able to make [the shot]," said Ateneo coach Norman Black. "We couldn't find Chris Tiu but we made good ball rotation."

While the Eagles celebrated at the buzzer, the defending champions, who led by as much as 10 points, froze in disbelief.

Anthony Espiritu's triple gave the Tigers their last 10-point spread, 55-45, late in the third quarter.

Cruz gave UST a 61-55 advantage, with 7:03 remaining, before committing his fourth foul that forced coach Pido Jarencio to rest him for about three minutes.

The absence of the 6-foot-4 slotman allowed the Eagles to overtake the Tigers, 63-61, and pave the way for the exciting finish.

The Tamaraws led by as much as 25 points midway in the third period, 54-29.

STANDINGS	W	L
Univ. of East	11	0
La Salle	8	3
Ateneo	6	4
Santo Tomas	6	5
Far Eastern	6	5
National U	4	6
Adamson	1	9
Univ. of Phils	0	10

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Cuneta Astrodome*)
2 p.m.—Adamson vs Ateneo
4 p.m.—Far Eastern U vs Univ. of East

They started the last quarter with a 24-point spread, 65-41, and duplicated it in the final 3:36, 74-50.

The Maroons, who also lost to the Tamaraws in the first round, now tote a woeful 0-10 slate.

Reil Cervantes starred for FEU, which snapped a two-game skid, with 16 points and 13 rebounds.

"We didn't use as motivation the fact that we were playing a winless team," said rookie FEU coach Glen Capacio. "We had everything to lose if UP beat us. This win gives us the confidence going into our next game."

Far Eastern would need more than confidence tomorrow against leader University of the East, which is sporting an 11-0 mark.

The scores

First Game

FEU 83—Cervantes 16, Baracael 9, Ramos 8, Cawaling 8, Cabagnot 7, Alisbo 6, Reyes 5, Tanuan 4, Abaring 4, Knuttel 4, Barroca 4, Fernandez 4, Sanga 2, Adolfo 2.

UP 61—Gamboa 11, De Asis 11, Sison 10, Wong 8, Reyes 7, Agbayani 5, Rosales 4, Dela Victoria 2, Co 2, Marfori 1, Rivera 0, Lopez 0, Hipolito 0, Serios 0.

Quarters: 26-12; 45-24; 60-41; 83-61

Second Game

ATENEO 72—Arao 20, Baclao 11, Long 10, Tiu 9, Escueta 6, Nkemakolam 5, Al-Hussaini 4, Monfort 3, Reyes 2, Laterre 2, Salamat 0.

UST 71—Cruz 22, Mirza 11, Espiritu 10, Cortez 6, Cañas 6, Taylor 4, Ababou 4, Gile 3, Cuan 2, Allera 2, Dizon 1.

Quarters: 13-18; 29-36; 50-57; 72-71

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La'O leads way for RP bets with 68

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN—LONGSHOT Cookie La'O assumed the unfamiliar role as Filipino spearhead by shooting a three-under-par 68 at the start of the Brunei Open here Thursday.

Gunning down four birdies against a bogey on the par-71 Empire Hotel and Country Club, La'O stood three strokes behind a five-man logjam at the top that included 2005 Philippine Open champion Adam Le Vesconte of Australia.

Antonio Murakami, surprise winner of the Iskandar Johor Open in Malaysia last week, sustained his form with a well-earned 69 that Juvic Pagunsan and Angelo Que matched.

COOKIE La'O

Tony Lascuña, who tied for second behind Murakami in Malaysia, shot a 70 while Mars Pucay and Jerome Delariarte had 71s.

A big disappointment, however, was Gerald Rosales, who opened with a 73. Leonardo Estrera carded a 72 with Marlon Dizon scoring a 74.

Le Vesconte, the RP Open winner at Malarayat, showed the way with a 65 along with fellow Australians Mark Brown and Scott Hend, Lin Wen-tang of Taipei and Guido Van der Valk of the Netherlands.

Four players shot 66s, seven came up with 67s and 13 ended up with 68s as the field exploited the ideal playing conditions in this $300,000 event. *Asian Tour News*

Pacquiao the writer

FILIPINO BOXING SUPERSTAR MANNY Pacquiao has found a new passion—writing.

His first article, entitled "Kumbinasyon" was posted at Philboxing.com yesterday.

According to Pacquiao, he has learned to live with his defeat in the last elections and is concentrating on training for his Oct. 6 rematch with Mexican Marco Antonio Barrera in Las Vegas. The article will also appear in today's issue of ABANTE.

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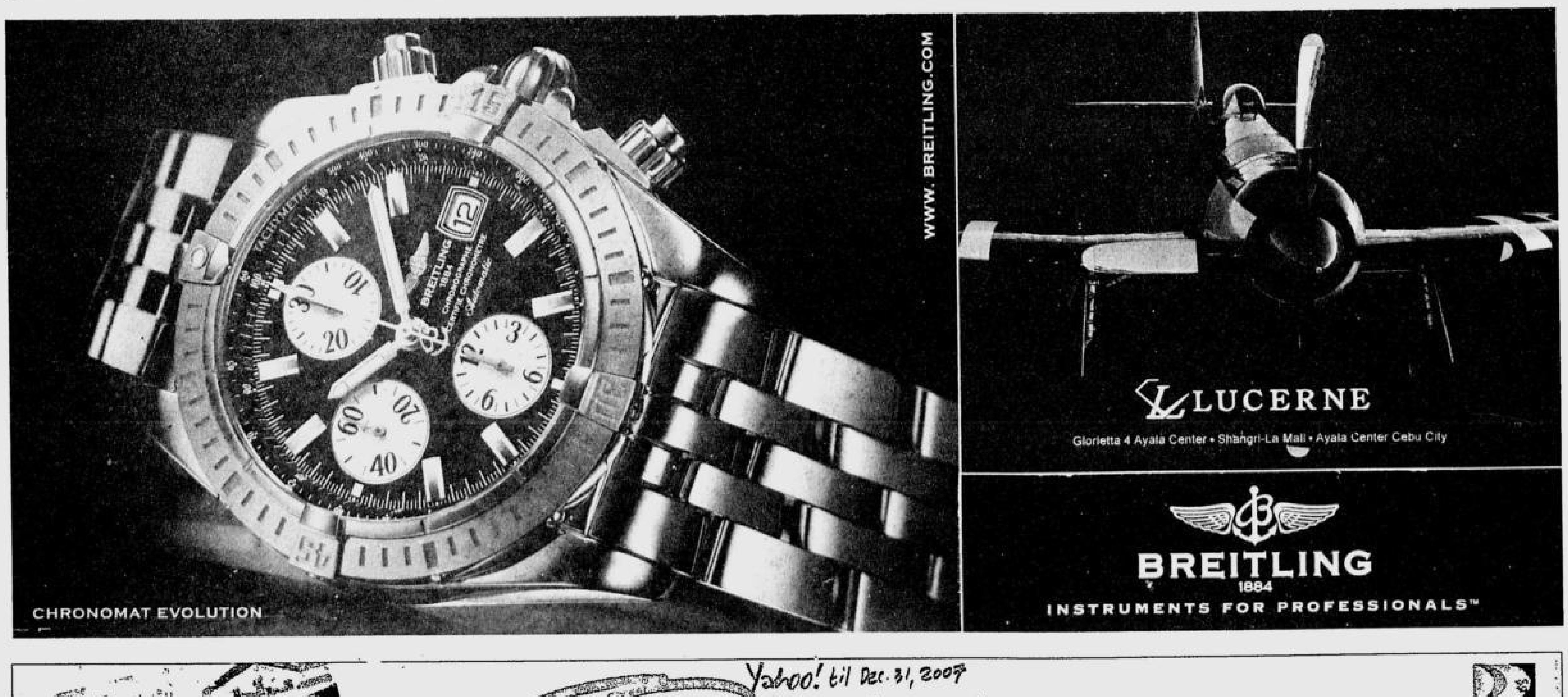

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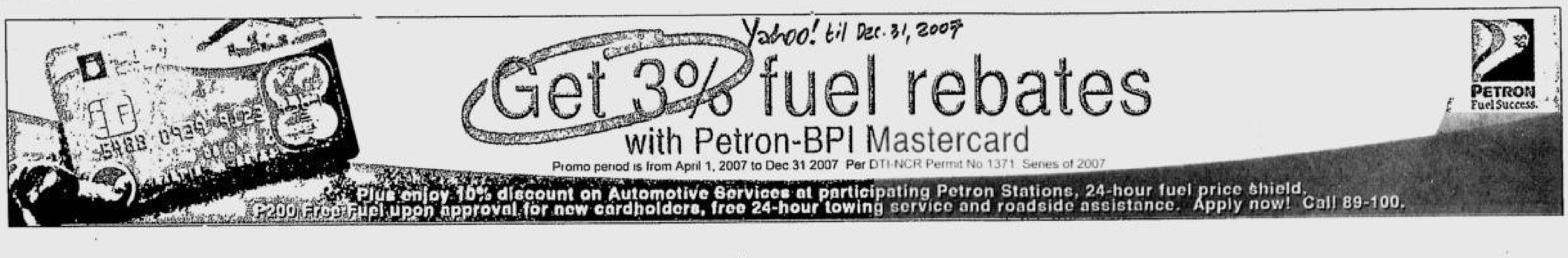

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Realtors down RP five, gain Brunei semis

STA. LUCIA REALTY HUMBLED THE HARbour-Philippine training team, 79-71, Wednesday night and secured its place in the knockout semifinals at the Brunei Cup basketball tournament at the Hassanal Bolkiah Sports Complex indoor stadium.

The game was close throughout with the Realtors capitalizing on poise and experience after taking control in the second quarter.

Sta. Lucia shone in the defensive end with 6-foot-9 Marlou Aquino and Kelly Williams showing the way for the Realtors, who improved their win-loss record to 3-1.

The Realtors are trying to become the first squad from the Philippine Basketball Association and the third Philippine team to rule the tournament in three consecutive years.

San Miguel-Team Pilipinas, represented by players from the PBA, won the championship in 2004 and 2005.

The Southeast Asian Games-bound Harbour-RP team was visibly overmatched against the Realtors, who are using this tournament as a tuneup for the coming PBA season.

The training team took a 19-15 lead after the opening quarter but the Realtors outscored the Nationals, 19-12, in the next period and returned to the locker with a three-point lead which they never relinquished.

Sta. Lucia was to take a well-deserved rest Thursday before closing its elimination round campaign against the winless Jordan All-Stars.

The training team, which absorbed its second loss in three games, tries to bounce back on Thursday against the unpredictable Singapore Slingers. The Nationals wind up their campaign against the Darwin Airport Resort All-Stars (2-2) on Friday.

AMA, SSC-C complete cast

DEFENDING CHAMPION AMA and San Sebastian-Cavite downed their respective rivals yesterday to complete the Final Four cast of the National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) basketball tournament at the New Era gym.

The Scorpions, with Leonardo Abac and Chito combining for 44 points, slipped past the Centro Escolar Titans (6-8), 89-83, while the San Sebastian-Cavite Bay Cats whipped the St. Clare Saints (6-8), 83-71.

STI (13-1) later formalized its claim of top spot with a 73-68 win over University of Manila (11-3).

AMA finished third with a 9-5 record behind STI's 13-1 card and UM's 11-3 slate. SSC-Cavite wound up fourth at 8-6.

The STI Olympians will meet the Bay Cats while the UM Hawks will take on the Titans in the Final Four slated on Sunday.

M. Fernando, Ababa share 54-hole lead

By Musong R. Castillo

MARK Fernando: A 1-under-par 71 despite tough pin placements.
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

SILANG, CAVITE—MARK FERNANDO SHOT A ONE-UNDER-PAR 71 DEspite a bogey on the final hole and tied Calatagan teammate Jonel Ababa for the lead after three rounds of the marathon NGAP Qualifiers yesterday at The Riviera's Couples layout here.

Ababa, the first winner of the National Caddies' Open, fashioned out a 73 and was tied with Fernando at 214 heading into the final round of the first phase of the 144-hole tryouts today.

Anthony Fernando, the ICTSI program's top bet, dropped five shots in his last five holes for a 77 that sent him from first to third at 217.

"The course played a lot tougher today," Mark Fernando, who missed the green on the 18th, said in Filipino.

"Pin placements were tough today and getting out there with a score in the low-70s is like shooting under par."

He actually started out with birdies in two of his first three holes.

Ababa had three bogeys, two of them on three putts, on the back nine.

Ferdinand Aunzo matched par 72 and was in fourth spot at 218 with steady Jay Bayron, bucking a double bogey-6 start on the way to a 73, fifth at 219.

Asian Games bronze medalist Michael Bibat stumbled with a similar 6 on No. 15 for a 74-221 and sixth spot.

Only the top 15 scores plus ties will advance to the second half of the tryouts, which the National Golf Association of the Philippines is holding to determine the members of RP teams that will see action in the Nomura and Putra Cups and the Southeast Asian Games.

Anthony Fernando, the 24-year-old native of Zamboanga who held the lead in the first two days, got himself undone after a birdie on the 13th hole, falling into all sorts of errors in his final five holes.

Knights seek Final Four incentive vs Red Lions

STANDINGS	W	L
San Beda	10	1
Letran	8	2
Jose Rizal	7	4
Mapua	6	6
S Sebastian	4	7
Perpetual	3	8
t. Benilde	1	11

GAMES TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
11:30 a.m.—JRU vs St. Benilde (Jrs)
2 p.m.—Letran vs San Beda (Jrs)
4 p.m.—Letran vs San Beda (Srs)

LETRAN SHOOTS for the twice-to-beat incentive while San Beda sans Yousif Aljamal seeks revenge.

Fired up by their respective missions, the Knights and the Red Lions will be going all out today when they clash in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

The 4 p.m. game is actually the first of two chances the second-running Knights (8-2) have to secure the twice-to-beat bonus earlier clinched by the Lions, who are on top of the heap at 10-1.

"This is a big game for us and, although we beat San Beda in the first round, we can never tell because San Beda is very tough... even without Aljamal," said Letran coach Louie Alas.

If they fail, the Knights get a last chance against the third-ranking Jose Rizal (7-4) on Wednesday.

With San Beda promising not to field Aljamal in the wake of a recent controversy sparked by the Red Lion star joining the PBA draft without league permission, the Knights enjoy a strong chance of repeating their 70-69 triumph in their first meeting.

San Beda coach Frankie Lim admitted that it's a tough assignment for the Red Lions.

Opting for speed, San Beda's guards and small forwards started with Sam Ekwe against Perpetual Help in an effort to prepare against Letran's vaunted open-court game.

Meanwhile, the league, bracing for a highly physical game today, ordered commissioner Chito Narvasa to discipline erring players.

To avert trouble in or out of the court, the commissioner can eject any player slapped with a flagrant foul. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Milo Little Olympics comes off the wraps

ABOUT 6,000 HIGH school and grade school athletes start their quest to become future Olympians when the 2007 Milo Little Olympics-NCR unfolds today at the Marikina Sports Park.

City Mayor Ma. Lourdes Fernando, Vice Mayor Marion Andres and Nestle executives Dennis Austriaco, SVP business executive manager for beverages unit; Michelle Calo-Alvarillo, AVP consumer marketing manager, and Robby Azefelius of the Milo brand will grace the opening rites starting at 8 a.m.

The Little Olympics, organized by the Children's Tennis Workshop, is celebrating its 20th year.

Events on tap: Volleyball, athletics, swimming, football, sepak takraw, table tennis, chess, badminton, lawn tennis, gymnastics and taekwondo.

PAL Intersports on in Cebu today

CEBU CITY—THE PHILIPPINE AIRLINES INTERsports, the country's top corporate sports festival, returns to its roots when its 30th championship opens here today featuring an expanded roster of 12 clubs and a new identity that highlights its role in boosting sports tourism.

Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn F. Garcia will lead the opening of the multisport games at the City Sports Club at 1 p.m. PAL senior assistant vice president Domingo T. Duerme, the tournament chair, will declare the games open.

The colorful ceremonies will feature the parade of teams and the lighting of the symbolic torch.

Over 800 athletes, all business executives and professionals from various PAL points, will take part in the three-day tournament that culminates with the crowning of the overall Intersports champion at the Grand Convention Center of Cebu on Sept. 1.

Now known as the "30th PAL Intersports in partnership with Island Holidays," the tournament will have as its co-presenter Air Philippines, which will soon introduce "Island Holidays" in the local market.

The first PAL Inter-Port Games, the forerunner of the Intersports, was staged here in 1975 with only three teams—Iloilo, Bacolod and host Cebu—playing each other in basketball.

Returning this year are the eight athletic clubs that form the core of the Intersports family—Bomberos de Davao, Caballeros de Zamboanga, Cagayan de Oro Executives, Amigos de Iloilo, Hermanos de Heneral Santos, Manila Executives, Negros Executives and hosts Jefes de Cebu.

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RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—Straight Express (4), Gobernadora (3), Royal King (5)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Mischievous (1), Bingbong (2), Secret Angel (5), Mandalay Bay (6)
Race 3—(Tri)—Lord Of All (1), Kirsten (4), Rapid Fire (5)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Prussian Gunner (9), Matikas (2), Visionary (4), Batang Eleven (8), Marcus Empire (4)
Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Princese Camille (3), Royal Lady Jane (5), Dark Desert (6), Mighty Mare (4)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Lord Gold (2), Gun Powder (1), En Gedi (3), Ideal Gaze (4)
Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—Court House (2), Ima (3), Royal Heiress (6), Grand Game (5)
Race 8—(Qrt/Tri)—Angel Eunice (1), Shutter (5), Giry (4), Out Of Sight (3)
Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Summit Force (3), Gelay's Charm (10), Tatank/Cool Turner (9), Celestial (6), Mary Jane Bomb (4), Heart Of The Wind (1)

Pasay stagfest kicks off today

PASAY CITY COCKPIT welcomes the stagfighting season with the "Battle of the Big Boys" 7-stag derby at 1 p.m. today with a 100-fight program supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. A select group of big-time cockers will each field all seven stags in one day, said pit manager Eric dela Rosa. For inquiries, call 843-1890 or 843-1746.

MILO MARATHON

Tight Iloilo qualifying run seen

GONZALEZ

DEFENDING CHAMPION WILFREDO GELladula and last year's runner-up Evert Miranda renew their rivalry on Sunday when the 31st Milo Marathon returns to Iloilo City.

After winning the men's 21K race by only 12 seconds last year, Gelladula is expected to engage Miranda in another exciting race to decide Iloilo's qualifiers to the grand finals slated in Metro Manila on Nov. 8.

The distaff side is a tossup between Genevieve dela Pena and Camille Kay Poral.

Local organizers hope to surpass last year's mark of 6,600 runners in the 21K race, 5K fun run and the kiddies 3K event.

At stake is a total cash prize of P159,600.

Held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Adidas, Cebu Pacific and Department of Tourism, the event will also feature a cheer-dance competition, said Milo AVP for Sports Pat Gocong.

Event coordinator Rommel Castro of the Youth and Development section of the Office of the City Mayor has invited Councilor Joe Espinosa III, chair of the city sports council, to send off the runners at 6 a.m.

Rep. Raul Gonzalez Jr. will lead other government officials in the 5K run.

D. Rosario, Ang head jet ski bidders

INTENSE WATERSPORTS ACTION IS EXPECTed as top contenders seek to fortify their title bids tomorrow in the second leg of the Petron-JSAP National Jet Ski Series off the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority in Subic, Zambales.

Last year's co-Riders of the Year Paul del Rosario of Petron-Kawasaki and BJ Ang are tipped to figure prominently in the races as they tune up for their campaign in the World Jet Ski Finals in Arizona in October.

Del Rosario, the first Filipino to reach the World Jet Ski Finals, won the Expert Runabout 1200 Open Unlimited in the first leg.

He also aims to make it double victory in the Stand-Up class against Peter Cruz and chief mechanic Yanik Elnar.

Ang, who made it to the Pro-Am finals in the World Jet Ski Finals, finished second to Del Rosario in the first leg.

Up against Del Rosario and Ang are Mike Mangio, Jeremy Chua, John Dee and Dong Arcillã.

Discover Sarah on Sunday!
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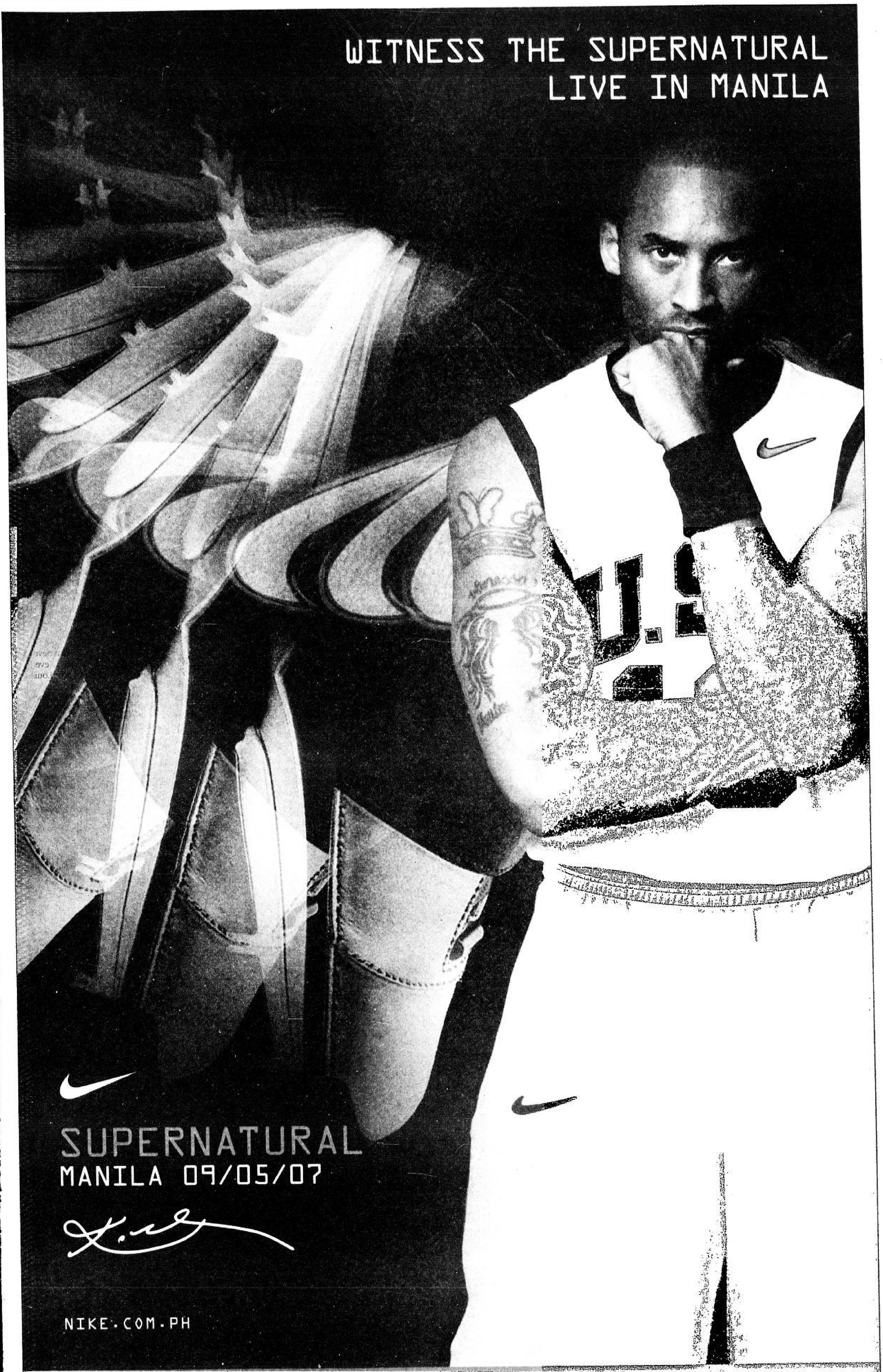
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Tickets will be given away on September 1, 12 NN at the Nike Park Bonifacio High Street, Taguig City. First come first serve. Two tickets per person.

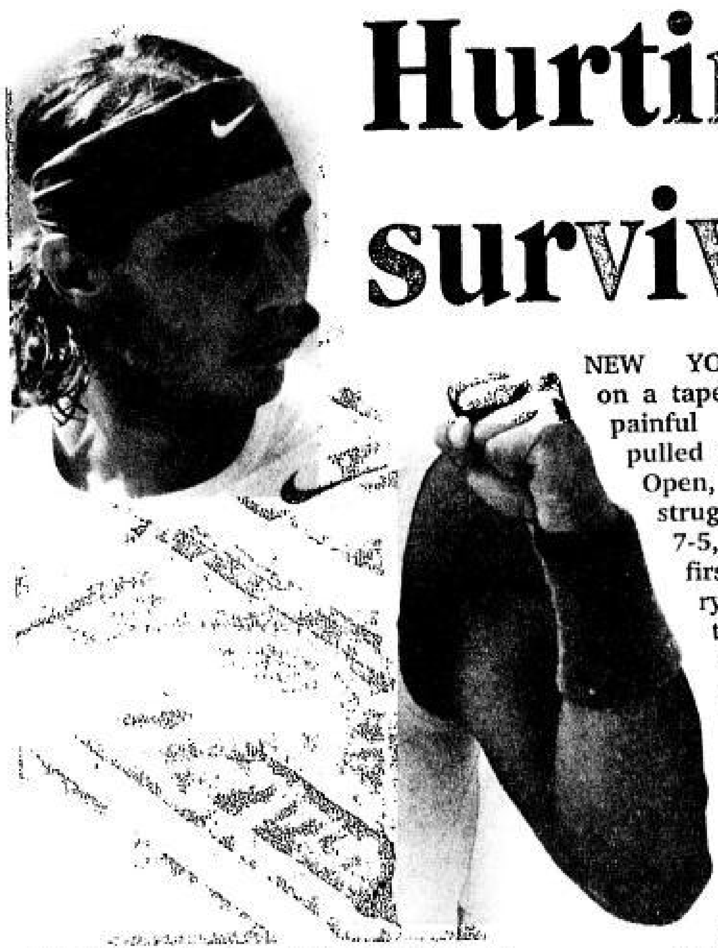
Beckham suffers knee injury

LOS ANGELES—ENGLAND'S DAVID BECKHAM WILL UNDERGO a scan after he suffered a knee injury playing for LA Galaxy on Wednesday, casting doubt on his fitness ahead of next month's Euro 2008 qualifiers. Beckham got out in the 33rd minute. *Reuters*

Horse flu spreads to New South Wales

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIA'S HORSE FLU CRISIS INTENSIFIED Thursday as the virus spread to stables in New South Wales, forcing the cancellation of Sydney's spring race carnival. Royal Randwick racecourse will be quarantined for 2 months. *AFP*

Hurting Nadal survives rival



RAFAEL Nadal: Playing with taped-up knee. AFP

NEW YORK—PLAYING on a taped-up knee so painful he almost pulled out of the US Open, Rafael Nadal struggled to earn a 7-5, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 first-round victory over Australian wildcard entry Alun Jones on Wednesday.

Nadal struggled to sprint, and scuffled against a foe who never has won a Grand Slam match, let alone a title.

On a day when his rival, No. 1 Roger Federer, won easily, three-time French Open winner Nadal hardly looked ready to flourish at Flushing Meadows, where his career mark is worse than at any other major.

Federer, bidding to become the first man since the 1920s to claim four straight US titles, beat Chile's Paul Capdeville, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4.

Top-seeded women's player Henin advanced into the third round with a 6-4, 6-0 win over Tsvetana Pironkova of Bulgaria.

Former Open champion marat Safin, crowd pleaser Ana Ivanovic, Tommy Robredo, Marion Bartoli, Mikhail Youzhny and Venus Williams also won. *AP*

US, Argentina stay unbeaten

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—CLEVELAND Cavaliers star LeBron James put on a show worthy of Las Vegas Wednesday, scoring 26 points in the United States' 118-79 victory over Uruguay in the FIBA Americas Olympic qualifying tournament.

Uruguay had the temerity to take an early lead, but the United States quickly erased it and led by more than 30 points for most of the second half. They forced 16 turnovers and shot 64 percent to remain unbeaten in the tournament.

James played just 14 minutes and led five US players in double figures. Amare Stoudemire of the Phoenix Suns added 19 points, Deron Williams of the Utah Jazz chipped in 14 and Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant 13.

Argentina needed overtime to beat Brazil, 86-79, and remain undefeated.

The defending Olympic champions trailed by double digits in the second half but persevered to force overtime and seize the victory.

Luis Scola of the Houston Rockets, and guard Leonardo Gutierrez each had five points in overtime, including a 3-pointer by Gutierrez with 2:33 to play to give Argentina the lead for good.

Like the United States, Argentina had qualified for the semi-finals on Tuesday. *AFP*

Yi signs up with Bucks

BEIJING—THE CHINESE PRESS ON Thursday hailed power forward Yi Jianlian's signing with the Milwaukee Bucks but warned the teenager would find it tough early on in the world's best basketball league.

The seven-foot (2.12 meter) Yi will make 2.3 million dollars in his debut NBA season, and much focus was on his potential to earn over 10 million dollars if he extends a two-year pact to four. *AFP*

Distress calls from Wild Card gym

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—IT GETS LONELIER EVeryday as they wait for Manny Pacquiao to return and complete his training here.

But, before everything, there are two distress calls that must immediately reach home.

The first comes from remaining staffers of Team Pacquiao here who now complain about the nauseating presence—a first-rate pest, they call him—of one hanger-on, an original of the so-called LA Boys, at the Pacman's gated Palazzio residence.

The second is from boxer Bert Batawang who, after a second frustrating cancelation of his big fight, continues to train extra hard with no idea whatsoever when he would officially enter the ring.

Now for the details:

* * *

Trainer Nonoy Neri says Pacquiao is super *bait*, super kind, super *maawain*.

But there's one problem: People take advantage of Pacquiao—"*niloloko na, nakatawa pa rin*."

Neri spoke of a certain Ramos, a flamboyant head of the LA Boys who was so close to Pacquiao he reportedly knew what brand of underwear the super boxer wears to sleep.

He reportedly absconded a big sum but, despite being banned from the quarters, he has been forgiven and was again seen visiting the Pacquiao camp here.

* * *

The bigger problem, Neri said, is the Pest.

Neri gave the floor to Greg Asuncion, a staffer at the LA Sheriff's office, who has been assisting Team Pacquiao around here:

"Please tell Boss Manny we cannot have peace and harmony because of this troublesome fellow. (Name given but withheld.) He's a big fake. OK, he's supposed to be in charge of the bills and other papers. But he's the main reason behind the disorder in the place. He's lazy and messes up the place. He drove Manny's car, even if he did not have a license and authority to do it. He's facing several charges, including battery and desertion. If he loves Manny, he should step out and stop smearing the Pacquiao reputation with his presence. Noboby likes him here."

* * *

Batawang was crushed when his first big outing, as member of the successful RP team in the Boxing World Cup in Sacramento earlier in the month, was called off at the last minute.

He took it with a grain of salt when this cancelation was followed by the slashing of his title fight against IBF light flyweight champion Ulises Solis, who reportedly injured his shoulder.

Dejected, Batawang prepared to pack up for home. But he got orders to stay put and continue training.

***"Pero kailan talaga ang laban, sana malaman namin* (But when do I fight? I need to know, at least)," Batawang wondered grimly.**

* * *

Well, the latest information from the Cebu office of manager Sammy Gello-ani is that Batawang could be included in an Oct. 4 card in Las Vegas.

But nothing is clear yet at this reporting.

As for the trouble at the Team Pacquiao quarters here, this reporter was reluctant to publish the urgent call.

But, sensing the distress, we found it our duty to fire away.

The Pacman, ever kindhearted, could pick it from there.

Photos courtesy of Mr. Lory Tan

bio·di·ver·si·ty *n* : The harmonious coexistence among 479 species of fish, 79 species of algae, 10 species of seagrass, 7 species of seabirds, 9 species of whales and dolphins, 2 species of marine turtles and some 6,340 townsfolk in Tubbataha Reef that Petron is helping to maintain. A marine park beyond compare, the Tubbataha Reef is located in the municipality of Cagayancillo, Palawan, right at the heart of Sulu Sea. It stands out as the only UNESCO World Heritage Site in the seas of Southeast Asia and is recognized as one of the country's best-managed protected areas.

Petron and WWF, the global conservation organization, are helping in the conservation and protection of this unique national treasure. Through the comprehensive program, 'Life and Livelihoods: Sustaining Tubbataha and Sulu Sea', residents of Cagayancillo are learning the necessary skills to better manage their rich coastal and marine resources. This partnership is helping conserve Tubbataha Reef to benefit thousands of residents and the generations to come. From the introduction of environment-friendly products to the preservation of marine resources, Petron continues to do its share of fueling life.

WWF for a living planet

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 2007

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IN THIS ISSUE

SSS opens P1-B lending window for SMEs, micro firms /B4

PCCI seeks ADB funding for Asean Hotel chain /B9

IN THIS ISSUE

DA to let a million trees bloom /B5

Batangas beckons to call center firms /B14

Stocks jump 3.45% on robust GDP growth

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo attends the Advanced Contact Solutions Inc. (ACS) call center inauguration in SM mall, Lipa City, Batangas. With the establishment of the call center in the city province, Batangueños can now practice their trade, and profit from their skills within city limits. *(See story on B14).* LYN RILLON

But market direction still hinged on Wall St.

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE STOCK MARKET ROSE SHARPLY YESTERDAY, SHAKING OFF recent worries about the US credit market, after the government announced better-than-expected economic growth figures.

Most market watchers initially reacted with surprise at the 7.5-percent growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) for the second quarter, but eventually welcomed it as a positive for local stocks.

"The economy is coming from a very low base so the numbers we're seeing now are because of a strong base effect," CitisecOnline president Conrado Bate said in an interview. "This is where the disbelief is coming from."

He pointed out that the economy was now experiencing the initial impact of the government's increased spending for infrastructure, which it was unable to do in recent years due to poor revenue collection.

"This growth is coming from government spending, which is why many people say that they can't feel it," Bate said. "It will take a while."

The stockbroker said it would take anywhere between one and two quarters for the government's increased spending to be felt at the lower strata of society because of the traditional lag of the so-called "trickle down effect."

Nonetheless, players in the financial sector are already reaping the benefits of the strong growth numbers.

The Philippine Stock Exchange index rose by 110.81 points, representing a single-day gain of 3.45 percent. The PSEi ended the trading session at 3,320.34.

Trading was heavy with P4.7 billion worth of shares changing hands. Gainers led losers 119 to 11, while 34 stocks were unchanged.

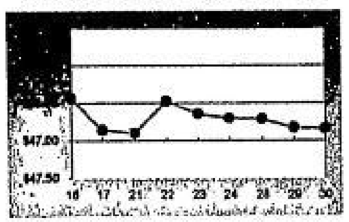
The Citisec chief warned that the good economic growth numbers alone were not sufficient to insulate the country from the liquidity crisis that is hitting stock and bond markets around the world.

"The economic data is a positive, but it is difficult to fight a liquidity crunch," he said,

STOCKS/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



AUGUST

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

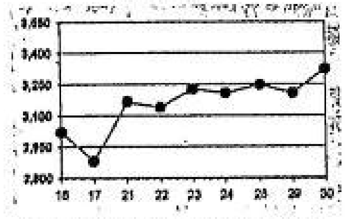
₱46.84 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 30, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

AUGUST



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Power supply shortage threatens RP's continued growth

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL AND FOREIGN BUSINESSmen yesterday urged the government to step up efforts in generating investments in the power sector to avoid a supply shortage that threatens the country's ability to sustain rising GDP growth rates.

Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr., honorary chair of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that while the current power supply situation left some slack before reserve capacities hit critical levels in 2010, the right time to start new power plants was now.

"We must remember that it takes two to three years to build a coal-fired power plant, for instance," Ortiz-Luiz said.

He was speaking to reporters during a business forum held at the Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati City, where the National Competitiveness Council's energy working group described the power situation in light of efforts to ramp up the country's ability to compete globally in trade and in attracting investments.

The PCCI organized the forum with the help of the American, Japanese, Filipino-Indian and French chambers of commerce and industry.

PCCI president Samie Lim said the 7.5-percent GDP growth rate posted in the second quarter was "not surprising" considering that PCCI had forecast a 7-percent growth this year.

"I talked about this when I assumed the PCCI presidency early this year," Lim said. "We believe things are looking good as well for the third quarter."

Addressing the forum, Federation of Philippine Industries chair Meneleo Carlos Jr. said the supply situation needed to be addressed promptly considering that power rate increases were inevitable amid growing demand.

"India and China—with GDP growth rates hitting 10 percent—are pushing up power demand," Carlos said. "This means that here in our region, energy consumption will lead GDP growth."

He added that the government and private sector must take steps to buy time (against the projected dwindling of reserve generation capacity) and mitigate the resulting increase in costs.

"In coping with these challenges amid global competition, we must copy Japan where GDP growth leads energy consumption rather than what we have elsewhere in Asia,"

POWER/ B4

Peso seen weakening to 48 to $1

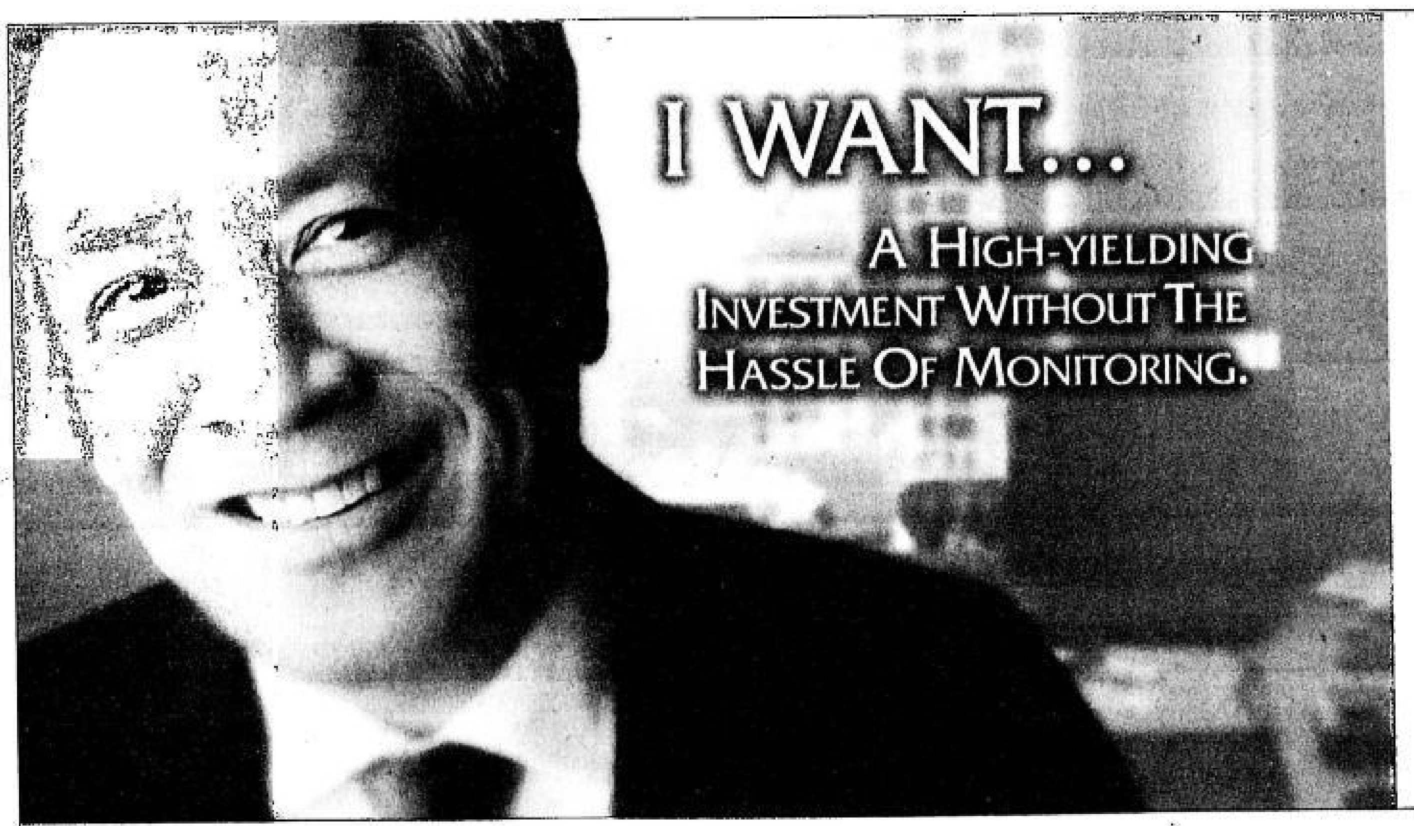
By Michelle V. Remo

EVEN THE ROBUST ECONOMIC GROWTH in the first half is not expected to spare the peso from the impact of a slowdown in the US economy and the subprime market scare.

Banco de Oro Universal Bank expects the peso to weaken further and wash away the gains it made in the first half. It sees the peso closing anywhere between 48 and 48.50 to the dollar by the end of the year.

"Effects of the subprime market was initially thought to be limited, but then it became global and worse than expected. We (BDO) don't think these concerns will die down in the near term, and these could ex-

PESO/ B4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RFM to sell treasury shares to finance expansion plan

By Daxim L. Lucas

RFM CORP. HAS FIRMED UP ITS plan to sell additional shares to the public as part of its effort to raise funds for its expansion program.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), the company said that its board of directors has approved the sale of 383.66 million treasury shares through a follow-on offering.

RFM said the sale of treasury shares was part of "ongoing efforts of the company to build up its resources to take advantage of market opportunities for its products and to fund other expansion moves on some of its brands."

No pricing terms were disclosed but RFM president Jose Ma. Concepcion earlier said that the company had planned to raise up to P1 billion from the stock market.

RFM has designated BDO Capital and Investment Corp. as issue manager and lead underwriter for the offering. The company has yet to announce the schedule of the offer, although the entire exercise is expected to be completed within the third quarter.

In the statement, RFM executive vice president and COO Felicisimo Nacino Jr. said the company was "proceeding on track, with solid growth being achieved in its core brands such as White King Fiesta pasta, Selecta milk and Moo chocolate drinks, Sunkist juice drinks, and Swift processed and canned meat products."

Nacino also cited the growing market acceptance of RFM's newly introduced products, including Selecta fortified filled milk, Moo high-chocolate milk, Sunkist high-juice and tea drinks in PET bottles, Swift meaty corned beef and Swift SAM natural-brown hotdogs.

"These product launches not only generate incremental sales volumes, but also signify the company's shift toward more health-giving and value-for-money alternatives for the consumer," he said.

Nacino said the company "must be able to prepare for the growing demands in these new categories, and the more we are able to expand these brands of RFM, the more we are able to build value for the company's shares."

Earlier, the company reported a 33-percent increase in consolidated net income to P123.3 million for the first half of this year from P92.9 million a year ago.

The company's shareholders also approved a change in the par value of RFM's common shares from P2 to P1, which is awaiting approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

CURRENCIES

August 30, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.731154	1.000000	46.9040
Japan	Yen	0.006292	0.008606	0.4037
United Kingdom	Pound	1.475104	2.017500	94.6288
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.093697	0.128149	6.0107
Switzerland	Franc	0.609651	0.833820	39.1095
Canada	Dollar	0.690355	0.944198	44.2867
Singapore	Dollar	0.480991	0.657851	30.8558
Australia	Dollar	0.597788	0.817595	38.3485
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.939607	2.652801	124.4270
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.194948	0.266631	12.5061
Brunei	Dollar	0.479414	0.655695	30.7547
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000078	0.000106	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.022497	0.030769	1.4432
UAE	Dirham	0.199073	0.272272	12.7706
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.367700	64.1506
Korea	Won	0.000776	0.001062	0.0498
China	Yuan**	0.096858	0.132473	6.2135
Denmark	Kroner	0.134293	0.183672	8.6150
India	Rupee	0.017855	0.024420	1.1454
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.208782	0.285551	13.3935
New Zealand	Dollar	0.513271	0.702001	32.9267
Sweden	Kroner	0.106788	0.146054	6.8505
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022120	0.030253	1.4190

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Aug. 29, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Aug. 29, 2007

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Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Aug. 28, 2007	Last Week Aug. 21, 2007
Bond Fund - Peso	1.59308	1.59112
Managed Fund - Peso	1.84673	1.82839
Growth Fund - Peso	1.77242	1.72215
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.3646	1.3624

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

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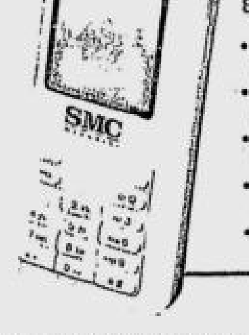


PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 30, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.7	1,000
73	36	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	55.5	56.5	55.5	56	1,658,300
73.5	52	Bank of the Philippine Islands	59.5	61	58.5	60.5	3,251,200
935	630	China Banking Corp.	815	825	815	820	4,280
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank, Inc	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.41	3,640,000
75.5	37	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	54.5	55	54	55	4,497,200
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	46	46.5	46	46.5	61,800
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	63.5	63.5	63.5	63.5	1,000
39.57	14.57	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	24.5	25	24.25	24.75	2,315,200
90	48	Security Bank Corp.	72	72	71.5	72	246,900
66	42.53	Union Bank of the Philippines	52	55	52	55	45,500
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.76	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.55	3.8	3.5	3.8	38,000
2.12	0.6	Bankard Inc.	2.04	2.12	2.02	2.12	24,041,000
16.25	2.06	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	10.5	10.75	10.25	10.5	655,000
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	310,000
42	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	41	42	6,500
1,730.00	1,555.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,700.00	1,715.00	1,700.00	1,715.00	620
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.15	3.3	3.15	3.25	7,538,000
3.1	1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	156,000
1,005.00	220	The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc	760	760	760	760	1,280
2,250.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,240.00	2,240.00	2,200.00	2,200.00	1,140
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp	1.44	1.48	1.44	1.48	173,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.8	5.2	4.8	5.2	17,256,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	20,000
70	43.5	First Gen Corp.	63	64.5	63	64.5	1,410,600
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	78	80	78	79.5	737,800
15	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	14	14.25	13.75	14.25	2,424,600
116	16.25	Manila Electric Co. "A"	96.5	101	96	100	904,100
118	25.5	Manila Electric Co. "B"	98	101	97	101	2,321,700
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	52,120,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	5.6	5.7	5.4	5.6	6,146,000
14.75	6.7	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.4	7.7	64,000
1.9	0.92	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.16	1.2	1,629,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.95	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.2	363,000
2.95	1.86	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2	2.1	1.86	1.9	601,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24	24	24	21,000
61	32	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52	53	52	53	563,800
9	4.7	Pancake House Inc.	9	9	9	9	30,000
1.96	0.78	RFM Corp.	1.5	1.52	1.5	1.52	325,000
3.9	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.22	2.22	2.2	2.22	548,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. "A"	61.5	64	61.5	63.5	80,600
88	60	San Miguel Corp. "B"	64.5	67	64.5	67	239,900
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.5	7,135,100
0.55	0.2	Vitarich Corp	0.38	0.38	0.35	0.36	1,090,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.59	EEI Corp.	4.4	4.65	4.4	4.65	1,722,000
9.2	4.7	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.8	8	7.7	7.8	1,137,000
7	1.28	Republic Cement Corp.	4.05	4.3	4.05	4.1	264,000
2	0.27	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.08	1.22	1.08	1.22	117,543,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.1	Chemrez Technologies Inc	4.3	4.35	4.25	4.25	1,521,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp	1	1	1	1	200,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.1	Picop Resources Inc	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.35	15,480,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc	0.085	0.0875	0.085	0.0875	16,200,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.59	0.6	0.57	0.59	9,070,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	3.3	3.35	3.2	3.25	1,636,000
3.7	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	3.5	3.5	3.35	3.45	222,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	20,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.01	0.011	0.0095	0.01	39,100,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.8	6.6	6.7	5,462,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	4.8	5.3	4.8	5.2	29,040,000
1.5	0.15	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2	2.04	2	2.04	1,137,000
590	358.33	Ayala Corp.	472.5	482.5	470	477.5	257,840
14.5	7.04	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	10,000
5.8	1.08	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.25	4.3	4.2	4.25	23,949,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.2	8.5	8.2	8.3	460,000
6.9	1.02	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.7	4	3.7	4	68,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.7	1,566,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	1.78	1.84	1.78	1.82	952,000
14.5	5.7	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	9.8	9.9	9.8	9.8	432,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.72	150,000
11.5	0.95	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.5	4.95	4.5	4.8	5,505,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.9	6	5.9	6	50,000
1.54	0.78	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.9	0.85	0.85	100,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	150,000
452.5	208.11	SM Investments Corp.	350	357.5	350	355	136,980
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.33	0.34	12,460,000
1.06	0.57	Solid Group Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	20,000
1.6	0.86	South China Resources Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	20,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	19.75	19.75	19.5	19.5	6,100
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.35	0.36	0.33	0.34	8,150,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	200,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings, Inc	7	7	6.8	7	207,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.68	0.69	0.68	0.69	330,000
19.25	11.04	Ayala Land Inc.	13.75	14.5	13.75	14.25	10,822,900
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.12	1.16	1.12	1.16	6,520,000
4.7	2.24	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.8	311,000
0.86	0.29	Crown Equities Inc.	0.6	0.64	0.6	0.61	6,810,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.42	130,000
0.99	0.47	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.71	0.72	0.71	0.71	8,870,000
0.47	0.048	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.225	0.225	15,520,000
1.48	0.43	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.12	1.2	1.12	1.18	28,540,000
2.44	1.07	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.46	1.58	1.46	1.58	90,730,000
0.49	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	700,000
0.5	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	150,000
2.9	0.85	Keppel Philippines Properties Inc.	2	2	2	2	50,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.55	0.6	1,120,000
4.4	1.56	Megaworld Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.35	3.4	31,071,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.7	3.95	3.7	3.7	26,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.35	370,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.41	0.43	0.41	0.43	1,300,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.6	52,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.25	2,844,300
5.9	1.37	SM Development Corp.	3.8	4.1	3.8	4.1	1,231,000
13.5	6.24	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.75	12	11.5	11.75	7,673,700
3.25	0.82	Shang Properties Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	52,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.58	300,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.27	2,400,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc	5.1	5.1	4.95	5	40,965,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31	31.5	31	31	7,400
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc	9.5	10	9.5	10	1,925,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.22	1.26	1.22	1.24	2,649,000
1,445.00	975	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,310.00	1,320.00	1,310.00	1,320.00	107,720
2,820.00	1,900.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,620.00	2,660.00	2,620.00	2,650.00	196,680
7.9	3.7	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.7	6.9	6.7	6.9	914,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.19	0.185	0.19	5,610,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9.7	10.5	9.6	9.8	328,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.7	8.8	8.7	8.8	1,386,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.031	49,300,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	200
2.9	1.6	Ionics Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	300,000
0.32	0.043	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.18	0.18	35,050,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.24	1.28	1.24	1.28	210,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	136,400,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l Inc.	2.55	2.55	2.48	2.5	412,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	990,000
6.8	3	Asian Terminals Inc.	4	4	4	4	627,000
34.5	14.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	31	31	30.5	31	1,775,900
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	30,000
2.04	1.02	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	13,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
16.5	4.2	Acesite (Phils.) Hotel Corp.	7	8	7	8	7,000
4.25	1.6	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3	3	3	3	110,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.79	0.82	0.78	0.78	3,260,000
		EDUCATION					
9.8	7.2	Centro Escolar University	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	35,000
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	90,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp	4.35	4.45	4.25	4.3	427,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	12	12	11.75	11.75	209,000
30	9.9	Paxys Inc	14	15	14	15	8,585,200
		MINING					
0.018	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	70,000,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	4.3	4.5	4.25	4.5	121,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	13	13.25	12.75	13.25	1,374,200
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.7	52,000
3.1	0.33	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	1.48	1.52	1.44	1.48	96,653,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.215	0.23	0.215	0.23	28,010,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	980,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.02	286,000,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	13,700,000
30	1.2	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	10.75	11.5	10.75	11	2,467,000
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	56,600,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.6	5,958,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	31	28.5	30.5	32,800
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.91	0.91	0.9	0.9	700,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.2	1.24	1.18	1.2	9,551,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	9,320,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	197,800,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.021	5,400,000
12.25	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.4	44,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	406,500,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	
Financial	863.50 UP	18.39	49,827,920	742,846,540.00
Industrial	4,705.02 UP	222.71	233,898,200	1,298,297,790.00
Holding Firms	1,842.67 UP	48.08	176,323,820	524,708,165.00
Property	1,509.84 UP	73.38	259,296,100	809,050,140.00
Service	1,583.22 UP	38.19	251,155,100	914,062,295.00
Mining & Oil	5,504.49 UP	241.52	1,191,263,000	264,447,595.00
All Shares Index	2,110.00 UP	64.71		
PSEI	3,320.34 UP	110.81		
		GRAND TOTALS	2,161,764,140	4,553,412,525.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Ruling on tender offer

Corporate Securities Info

Raul J. Palabrica

UNTIL THE ENACTMENT OF the Securities Regulation Code in 2000, minority stockholders in large companies were ignored in mergers and acquisitions.

Before, if anyone wanted to gain control of a company, he negotiated quietly with the major stockholders on the purchase of their shares.

For obvious reasons, the offer to buy carried a premium on the shares' book value. It was a seller's market and the stockholders took advantage of the situation.

The transaction was announced to the rest of the stockholders and the public after the targeted number of shares had been acquired.

The stockholders who were not in on the deal and were unhappy with the change in ownership usually opted out by offering their stocks to the new group.

A buyer's market this time, the new owners either ignored the offer or dictated the price they were willing to buy those shares, often at a price lower than that paid to the erstwhile major shareholders.

Take or leave it.

The cash-strapped stockholder had, like a beggar, no choice but accept whatever price was offered to him and charge to experience the raw deal he got. The other stockholders could only pray that the new management will treat them fairly.

Listed companies

The Code changed the rules on mergers and acquisitions for companies listed on the stock exchange and public corporations (or those with assets worth at least P50 million and have 200 or more stockholders who own a minimum of 100 shares each).

Any person or group of persons acting in concert who intends to acquire at least 35 percent of any class of shares of these corporations, on a one-time basis or over a 12-month period, is required to make a tender offer to all the stockholders.

The prospective buyer must publicly declare, ahead of time, its intention to buy such number of shares it wants to acquire and at what price.

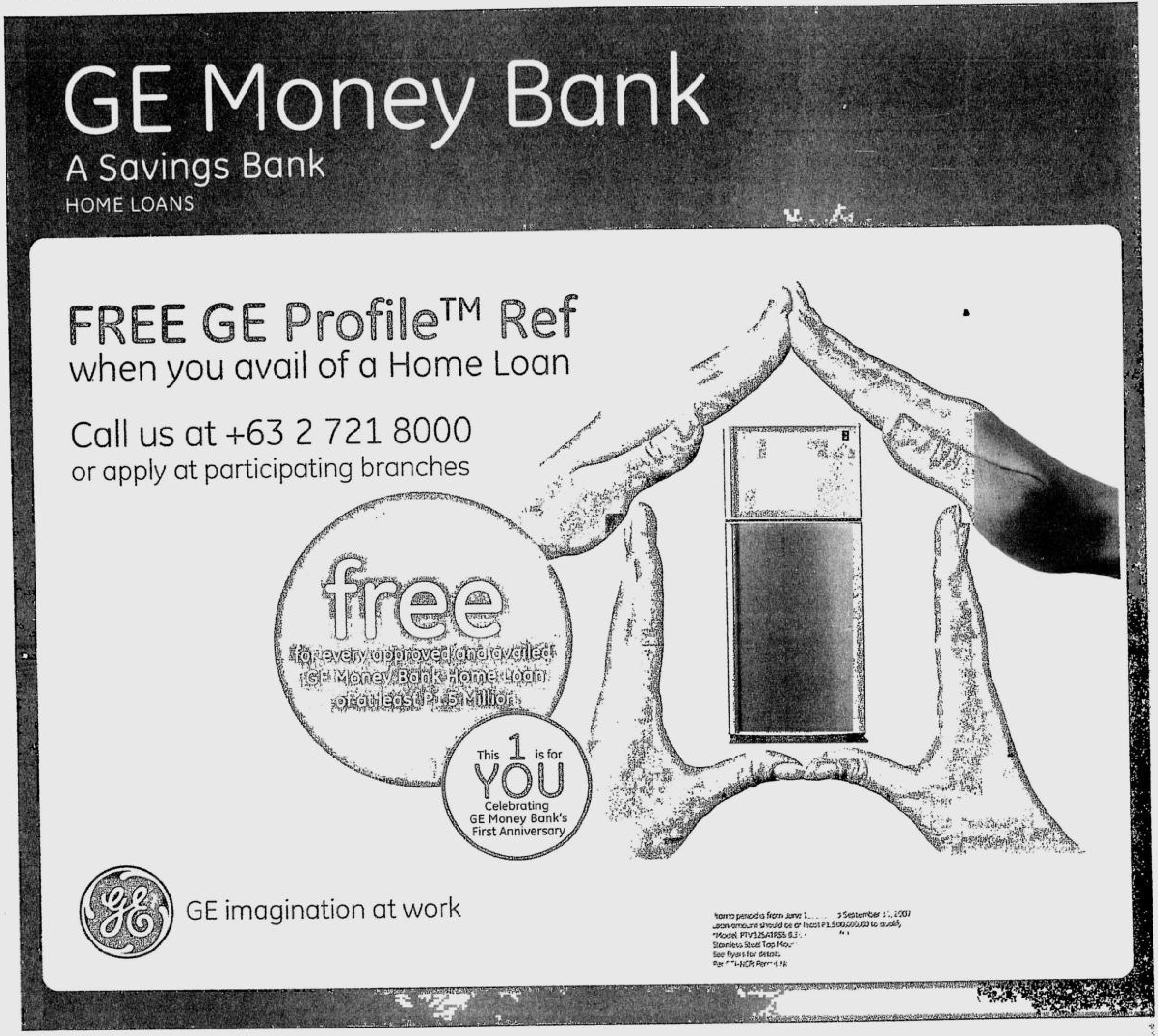
The announcement should also state the time frame and manner by which the offer should be accepted by interested stockholders.

If more stocks than planned to be purchased are offered for sale, the buyer is obliged to buy them proportionately. All the shareholders, not only those who own big chunks of stocks, should be given the opportunity to sell at the offer price.

Ownership ratios

Failure to comply with the tender offer rules could give rise to fines and penalties on the

RULING/ B8



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Promo period is from June 1 [illegible] September [illegible] 2007
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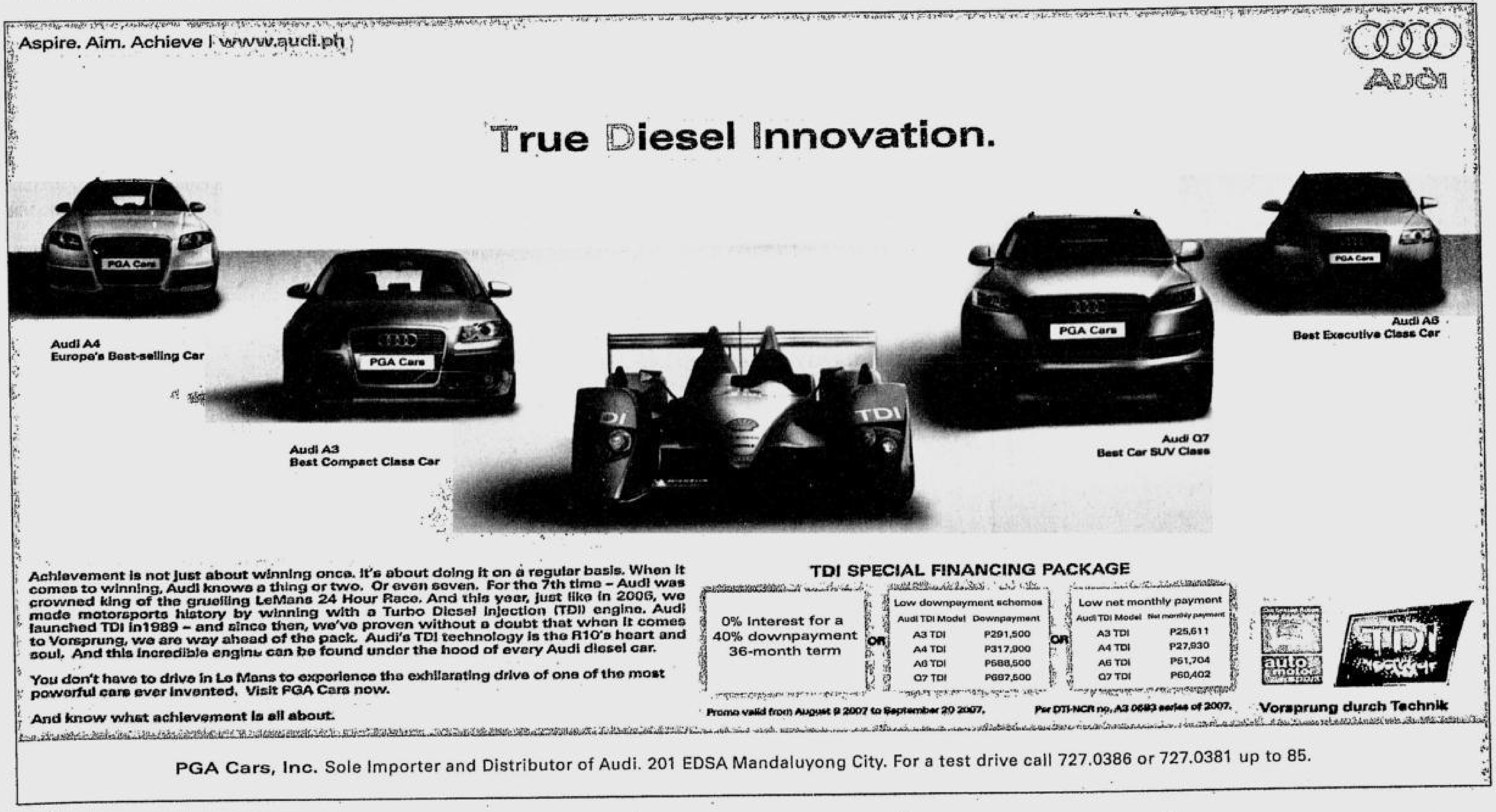
*Model PTV12SATRSS [illegible]
Stainless Steel Top Mou[illegible]
See flyers for details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. [illegible]



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Q7 TDI	P687,500

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Audi TDI Model	Net monthly payment
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A6 TDI	P51,704
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SSS opens P1-B lending window for SMEs, micro firms

For relending at a maximum interest rate of 10% a year

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE STATE-OWNED SOCIAL Security System has opened a P1-billion wholesale lending facility to help micro, small and medium enterprises obtain cheaper loans from banks.

In a briefing yesterday, SSS president Corazon dela Paz said the new facility was the pension fund's contribution to pump-prime economic development that, in turn, should create more jobs and expand the pension fund's membership base.

The SSS, which caters to private sector employees, will farm out the P1 billion to its accredited banks for relending to microbusinesses and SMEs for three years at a maximum annual interest rate of 10 percent.

The lending facility, which is part of the SSS' public service in line with its 50th anniversary celebration, will be available only from Sept. 1 this year to Aug. 31 next year.

It will be open to start-up or existing microbusinesses and SMEs, including schools and hospitals. However, importers and those engaged in businesses involving "sin" products like alcohol and cigarettes are not eligible for the program.

To date, the SSS' active conduit banks are Allied Bank, Asia United Bank, Asiatrust Development Bank, Bank of Florida, East West Bank, Banco de Oro EPCI, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Philippine Veterans Bank, Planters Development Bank, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and Union Bank of the Philippines.

Under the facility, the SSS will lend to the banks at an annual interest rate of 6 percent while the banks can relend the money at a spread of 4 percentage points or up to a maximum interest rate of 10 percent rate for the SME end-user, according to Luz Generoso, SSS assistant vice president for loans.

From January to June this year, the SSS earned P15.58 billion in investment income and collected another P29.94 billion from members' contribution.

The investment income surged from last year's P6 billion following the recent sale of shares in blue chips like San Miguel Corp. and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

The SSS sold its shares equivalent to a board seat in SMC for P13.22 billion and generated another P2 billion from the sale of some PLDT shares.

Of the SSS' investment earnings for the first half, P10.86 billion came from stock market income and P2.36 billion from government securities.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILS. INC. 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Mohammad Yunus Shaik	Procurement Manager
NIHAO CHINESE LANGUAGE ACADEMY INC. 15/F Strata 100 Bldg., F. Ortigas Jr. Rd., Ortigas Center, Emerald Ave., Pasig City	Gi Han Sim	Asst. Operations Manager
NEW MILLENIUM EVANGELICAL CHURCH INC. 770 Gen. Malvar St., Malate, Manila	Pai Lim Paul Ng	Senior Pastor
PHILIP MORRIS PHILIPPINES MANUFACTURING INC. 27/F Tower I, Enterprise Ctr., 6766 Ayala cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Akos Balogh	Executive Manager Business Planning and Development
CHINA STATE (PHILS.) CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING CORPORATION 31/F U3102 Orient Square Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Yun Wang	Civil Engineer
CHINA STATE (PHILS.) CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING CORPORATION 31/F U3102 Orient Square Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Minqiang Cai	Civil Engineer
CHINA STATE (PHILS.) CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING CORPORATION 31/F U3102 Orient Square Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Yingfeng Wang	Civil Engineer
JGC PHILIPPINES, INC. 2109 Prime St. Madrigal Bus. Park, Ayala Alabang Muntinlupa City	Jimmi Fujita	Quality Control Manager
HIM ALONE LTD. CO. 849 J. Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Haiyang Chen	Research & Communication Analyst
HIM ALONE LTD. CO. 849 J. Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Tianci Chen	Production & Export Analyst
ROBINSONS LAND CORPORATION 43/F Robinsons Equitable Tower, ADB Ave. cor. Poveda Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	David Ian Jamieson	Resident Manager
GLIDE EASY TRADERS CO. LTD. Unit A Meiling Tower, 1133 Aguilar St., Tondo, Manila	Chunhui Lin	Designing Manager
GLIDE EASY TRADERS CO. LTD. Unit A Meiling Tower, 1133 Aguilar St., Tondo, Manila	Yingxue Wu	Operations Manager
GLIDE EASY TRADERS CO. LTD. Unit A Meiling Tower, 1133 Aguilar St., Tondo, Manila	Fengnan Guo	Assistant General Manager
LEEKIE ENTERPRISES, INC. 24/F Burgundy Corp. Tower, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Huey Chun Leong	Customer Support Staff
LEEKIE ENTERPRISES, INC. 24/F Burgundy Corp. Tower, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Choy Foo Chong	Customer Support Staff
BAYVIEW TECHNOLOGIES, INC. 43/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Ping Chen	Chinese Customer Support Associate
ORIENT CAPITAL VENTURES INC. 5/F Adriatico Square, Adriatico St., cor. Gen. Malvar, Malate, Manila	Hak Wing Lam	Line Operation Manager
SK WORLDWIDE BUSINESS CONSULTANCY 1641-A Bay Imperial Bay Front Tower, Mabini, Ermita, Manila	Seung Chol Shin	General Manager
ECOLAB PHILIPPINES INC. 2/F Alabang Business Tower, Madrigal Business Park, Acacia Ave., Muntinlupa City	Siu Man Ivan Kong	General Sales Manager
SINOPHIL MINING AND TRADING CORPORATION Unit 22, 3/F Legaspi Tower 200 Roxas Blvd., cor. Vito Cruz, Malate, Manila	Mingjian Yu	President

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC-Regional Director

(PDI – August 31, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Securities and Exchange Commission
SEC Building, Englis Guadalupe
V. Rama Avenue, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Securities and Exchange Commission, Cebu Extension Office, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Project : Repair/Restoration of the SEC Cebu Extension Office Building
Location : SEC Bldg., V. Rama Avenue, Englis Guadalupe, Cebu City
Brief Description : General Repairs of ground, second, third, fourth & roof deck
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P 5,559,408.00
Contract duration : 150 calendar days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	September 8 to 14, 2007
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	September 15 to 22, 2007
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	September 20 to 29, 2007
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	October 8, 2007
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	October 9 to 17, 2007
6. Pre-Bid Conference	October 31, 2007
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	November 12, 2007

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at SEC, Cebu Extension Office upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,500.00 to the Securities and Exchange Commission's Cashier. Prospective Bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,500.00 to the Securities and Exchange Commission's Cashier.

The SEC, Cebu Extension Office assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved By:
(Sgd.) **Lorna N. Fick-Cubero**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – Aug. 31 & Sept. 9, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Ilocos Norte
MUNICIPALITY OF VINTAR

Project Reference Number: 2007-14

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **Municipal Government of Vintar, Ilocos Norte**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Project : **Construction of the New Public Market and Perimeter Fence**
Location : **Brgy. 08, Margaay, Vintar, Ilocos Norte**
Approved Budget for the Contract : **P25,000,000.00**
Fund Source : **Local Development Fund, CY 2007**

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1 Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including application for eligibility	September 07-13, 2007
2 Issuance of Eligibility Forms	September 07-13, 2007
3 Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	September 14, 2007
4 Issuance of Results of Eligibility Check	September 14, 2007
5 Issuance of Bidding Documents	September 17-21, 2007
6 Pre-bid Conference	September 24, 2007; 2:00 p.m
7 Receipt and Opening of Bids	October 08, 2007; 9:00 a.m. Mayor's Office Conference Room Vintar, Ilocos Norte

Bid documents will be available only to eligible bidders at the BAC-TWG Office upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Twenty Five Thousand Pesos (P25,000.00) to the Municipal Treasury.

The Municipal Government of Vintar, Ilocos Norte assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid. It likewise reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or any part thereof, to waive any defect in the bid/s received without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders, and to accept such bid/s considered most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. JACKSON A. ACACIO**
Municipal Engineer/BAC Chairman

(PDI–August 31, 2007)

LRTA invites bidders for MRT expansion

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE AUCTION FOR THE P6.57-billion northward extension of Line 1 of the overhead Light Rail Transit in Metro Manila will start next week, Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) Administrator Melquiades Robles told the INQUIRER.

He would not specify how many potential bidders will be invited, saying only that the feasibility study for the project has been finished and that the project was expected to generate a lot of interest.

The project will extend the LRT Line 1 by 5.4 kilometers from the Monumento Station to the Metro Rail Transit station in North Avenue. The link will close the so-called Edsa loop of overhead railway.

New stations will be built at the Muñoz and Balintawak areas and at North Avenue, beside the Metro Rail Transit station.

"If all goes well, the project will be finished by April 2010. We don't foresee any problems," Robles said.

Construction is expected to start next year.

The LRTA is also talking to power grid operator National Transmission Corp. (Transco) for a direct power connection for the Line 1 extension.

Robles told reporters in an earlier interview that the LRTA had long wanted to address interruptions in commercial power supply, especially when typhoons strike, by tapping directly into a power provider or getting more generators.

There are two options for a direct connection.

"One is the substation in Balintawak and the other is in Araneta," Robles said. "Connecting with the substation in Balintawak is cheaper and easier because we would just need about five kilometers of cable. And this opportunity opened up because we will be having a station in Balintawak under the extension project."

Stocks jump . . .

From page B1

explaining that it will help mitigate the effects of the US subprime crisis.

"When the dust settles, they will take a closer look at our fundamentals," Bate added.

Unicapital Securities research head Ron Rodrigo conceded that the latest economic growth numbers were surprising—beating most analysts' forecasts by a full percentage point—but added that this was likely due to market watchers having missed certain developments in their forecasts.

"We might have overlooked important details," he said, citing the stronger-than-expected growth in the services sector. "We have a very strong performance from the telecommunications sector as more and more people are going into broadband [services]."

Rodrigo said it would be difficult for the local economy to sustain a growth rate of above 7 percent for the rest of the year, but added that the full-year number would now likely be closer to the government's high-end forecast of 6.7 percent.

As a result of this, he expects local share prices to trade higher in succeeding days, tempered by developments in the US stock market.

Power supply . . .

From page B1

Carlos said.

"We must focus on raising product value per peso of electricity," he said. "(This means) we should push toward higher value markets with better products."

Carlos said this could be achieved by shifting from commodity goods into high-value goods with better quality and design as well as focusing on service industries like business process outsourcing, tourism and travel, and healthcare and retirement homes.

Energy Undersecretary Melinda Ocampo said the government was addressing the situation by accelerating the privatization of National Power Corp.'s power plants and paving the way for the realization of open access or free competition in subsectors that were currently natural monopolies.

"We aim to have privatized half of Napocor's assets in Luzon and Mindanao (2,168 megawatts) by the end of this year and 70 percent (3,035 MW) by end-2008," Ocampo said.

Peso . . .

From page B1

tend up to the first quarter of 2008," Jonathan Ravelas, market strategist for BDO, told the INQUIRER.

Although the economy grew stronger than expected in the first half, Ravelas said some investors have become more risk averse and pulled away placements from perceivably risky areas like the Philippines.

The economy grew 7.5 percent in the second quarter, marking its strongest performance in 20 years. This brought the economy's growth in the first half at 7.3 percent. The government revised the first-quarter growth figure to 7.1 percent from the previously reported 6.9 percent. *(See story on Page 1.)*

Ravelas said the record growth in GDP would not go unnoticed by investors, but that it would not be enough to offset the ill-effects of the subprime market concerns.

"(GDP in the second quarter) showed that the economy remained resilient (due to the) strong performance (of) the services and industry sectors, but we should not sit on our laurels because there are factors that contributed to the growth in the first half, but are absent in the second half," Ravelas said.

The analyst cited spending for the elections and the low interest rate environment, which he said gave a boost to the economy's first-half performance.

Ravelas said the economy, as measured by its GDP, was likely to grow by 6.5 percent for the entire 2007. His projection is still within the government's official target of between 6.1 and 6.7 percent, although it took into account an expected slowdown in the second half.

The peso nearly touched the 47:$1 mark last Wednesday, pulled down by volatility in the external environment. It closed at 46.83 against the greenback, tumbling from its seven-year high late in the first half when it touched the 44-to-a-dollar level.

But Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan, who also serves as acting national treasurer, was optimistic about the possible impact of the robust economic growth in the second quarter to the fixed-income market.

DA to let a million trees bloom

SWARM project to cover watersheds, small farms; volunteers wanted

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE has embarked on a massive greening project to help counter the adverse effects of future seasonal dry spells.

This will include the planting of one million trees in watersheds and the rehabilitation of small water impounding works in farms across the country.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said in a statement that the project, dubbed the Soil and Water Army for Resources Management (SWARM), is initially being implemented in the North Luzon Agribusiness Quadrangle (NLAQ).

Yap said that on a nationwide scale, SWARM will cover a total of 6.6 million hectares of land in Luzon, and another 1.41 million hectares in the Visayas, which are prone to droughts or typhoons.

He added that SWARM will require one million volunteers to plant vegetables, fruit trees and forest tree species in identified priority sites.

"The increasing vulnerability to drought, soil erosion, extended dry spell and alternating incidence of El Niño and La Niña underscore the need for this wide-scale greening and rehabilitation project," Yap said.

According to Yap, the priority SWARM areas are Kalinga, Ilocos Sur, Isabela and Nueva Ecija, which cover a total of 2,243 hectares of watershed areas.

Volunteers will plant fruit trees like *camachile, duhat, kamansi*, cashew, *calamansi* and other citrus; and other species such as *caturay, malunggay, alucon*, tamarind and *atsuete*.

The project also includes the repair and restoration of small water impounding projects (SWIP) servicing 400 hectares, which will benefit some 4,000 farmers, as well as the rehabilitation of 19,600 hectares of upland areas in Northern Luzon, Yap said.

Another key component of SWARM is the dredging and cleaning of water reservoirs, canals, spillways and dams.

On Yap's orders, the Department of Agriculture has already provided drought-hit provinces with shallow tube wells, seeds, vaccine vials and other means of assistance.

For farmers who have not yet planted *palay*, the DA has likewise encouraged them to shift to short-maturing hybrid rice varieties, hybrid corn, vegetables and other dry-season crops.

RP air travel market grows with region

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINE AIR TRAVEL INDUSTRY is growing in step with the rest of Asia-Pacific, according to the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB).

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has projected that Asia-Pacific air travel will increase this year by 6.6 percent.

CAB expects the Philippine aviation industry to grow at the same pace may even get a little ahead with a 7-percent expansion.

Data from CAB showed that from January to June, the number of domestic airline passengers increased 24.34 percent to 5.16 million from 4.15 million in the same period last year.

Philippine Airlines reported a load factor of 80 percent from 79 percent a year ago. The Lucio Tan-owned flag carrier flew 1.98 million passengers for the first six months of the year from 1.97 million last year.

Cebu Pacific reported an 84-percent load factor for the period from 74 percent last year.

The Gokongwei-owned budget carrier also reported the most number of passengers with 2.25 million from January to June compared with 1.3 million last year.

PAL and Cebu Pacific both cited fleet expansion, promotional offerings, aircraft optimization efforts and new-market cultivation as reasons for their improving traffic.

In terms of passenger numbers, Air Philippines was a far third with 544,340 passengers, followed by Asian Spirit (248,456) and Southeast Asian Airlines (136,588).

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Investment Funds of Wealth Builder & Wealth Secure

	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
	August 24, 2007	August 17, 2007
Fixed Income Fund	1.275435	1.274650
Balanced Fund	1.413368	1.347278
Equity Fund	1.652081	1.491116

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

Hotel group eyes Bohol

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—HOtel group Waterfront Philippines Inc. (WPI) is looking at Bohol as a potential site for expansion.

WPI director Kenneth T. Gatchalian said in an interview on the sidelines of WPI's recent stockholders' meeting that the group considers Bohol a lucrative destination due to its proximity to Cebu, a major tourist destination.

WPI chair Renato B. Magadia said, however, that expanding to Bohol is part of the long-term goals of the group.

In the near term, WPI will concentrate on upgrading existing facilities.

Magadia also reported that the company posted a P18.24-million consolidated net income in 2006, down from P42.96 million in 2005 due mainly to higher expenses. WPI also reported a 12.7-percent drop in revenues in the first quarter this year from the same period last year.

The company attributed the decrease of revenues to the 29-percent increase in costs and expenses.

The average food cost increased by 5.13 percent from last year, the company said.

The company's occupancy percentage also went down to 67.97 percent in the first quarter, which has spurred the group to embark on a more aggressive marketing campaign this year.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
Bureau of Customs
1099 Manila

CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO: 7-2007

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO CAO 3-2004 PROVIDING FOR NEW RATES OF SERVICES, STORAGE AND OTHER CHARGES ON ARTICLES / MERCHANDISE STORED AT CUSTOMS BONDED WAREHOUSE NOS. 31, 55, 83,124, 125, 128 AND 158 OPERATED BY PHILIPPINE SKYLANDERS, INC., PHILIPPINES AIRLINES, PAIRCARGO, DELBROS, CARGOHAUS (FORMERLY U-WAREHOUSE), DHL PHILIPPINES, MIASCOR LOGISTICS, AND TMW WORLDWIDE EXPRESS, WITHIN NAIA COMPLEX

By authority of Section 608 in relation to Section 1909 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, as amended, and in line with the Bureau's effort to standardize various changes for operations affecting imported cargoes before actual delivery to the importer/consignee, and taking into account the service, storage and other charges on articles/merchandise stored in the CBWs being operated by the Philippine Skylanders Inc., Philippine Airlines, People's Aircargo and Warehousing Co. Inc., Delbros Inc., Cargohaus Inc., (formerly U-Warehouse), DHL Express Philippines, Inc., Miascor Cargo Logistics, and TMW Worldwide Express, all Customs Bonded Warehouses within the NAIA Complex, shall be governed by the following rules:

I. BASIC STORAGE RATES

A. General Cargo (No Free Storage)	**FROM**	**TO**
Rate	PHP 1.17/kg/day	PHP 1.76/kg/day
Minimum Charge	67.51/day	101.27/day
Exception : Documents and Diplomatic Pouches	45.00/day	67.50/day

B. Special Cargo	**FROM**	**TO**
Minimum Charge	PHP 134.50/day	PHP 201.75/day
Baggage and Personal Effects	1.17/kg/day	1.76/kg/day
Perishables	2.35/kg/day	3.53/kg/day
Valuable Cargo	2.35/kg/day	3.53/kg/day
Dangerous Drugs and Restricted Articles	2.35/kg/day	3.53/kg/day
Live Animals, Fowls, Plants	2.35/kg/day	3.53/kg/day
Human Remains	2.35/kg/day	3.53/kg/day

II. SERVICE CHARGES

Rate of Change	**FROM**	**TO**
For shipment whose weight per AWB is less than one hundred (100) kilograms	PHP 0.46/kg/day	PHP 0.69/kg/day
For shipment whose weight per AWB is one hundred (100) kilograms or more	0.68/kg/day	1.02/kg/day

III. ANCILLARY CHARGES

A. Backdoor Release	**FROM**	**TO**
Rate	PHP 3.75/kg/day	PHP 5.63/day
Minimum Charge	224.50/kg	336.75/kg
Maximum Charge	375.00/AWB	562.50/AWB

B. Deconsolidation Fee	**FROM**	**TO**
Fixed Rate	PHP 189.00/HAWB	PHP 283.50/HAWB

C. Returned Shipment Fee	**FROM**	**TO**
Rate	PHP 37.51/kg	PHP 56.27/kg
Minimum Charge	225.00	337.50
Maximum Charge	375.00	562.50

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

IV. CLASSIFICATION OF CARGOES

A. General Cargo

All cargoes not included in the above enumeration for special cargo, each kind, class or nature is described herein below.

B. Special Cargo

1. Baggage and personal effects - shipments that are handled with special care and provided special storage locations.
2. Perishables - shipments shown as such in the Cargo Manifest (CM) and Airway bill (AWB) or labeled / identified on the package/s as such, hence requiring storage under specified temperatures. (All aquatic products fall under this classification).
3. Valuable Cargo - shipments shown in the CM and/or AWB as such or so labeled/identified on the package/s pursuant to IATA regulations.

All other provisions of CAO 3-2004 not otherwise repealed, modified, or amended shall remain in force and effect.

All Orders inconsistent herewith are hereby deemed repealed or modified.

This Order shall take effect 15 days after publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

APPROVED:

HON. MARGARITO P. TEVES
Secretary of Finance

HON. NAPOLEON L. MORALES
Commissioner

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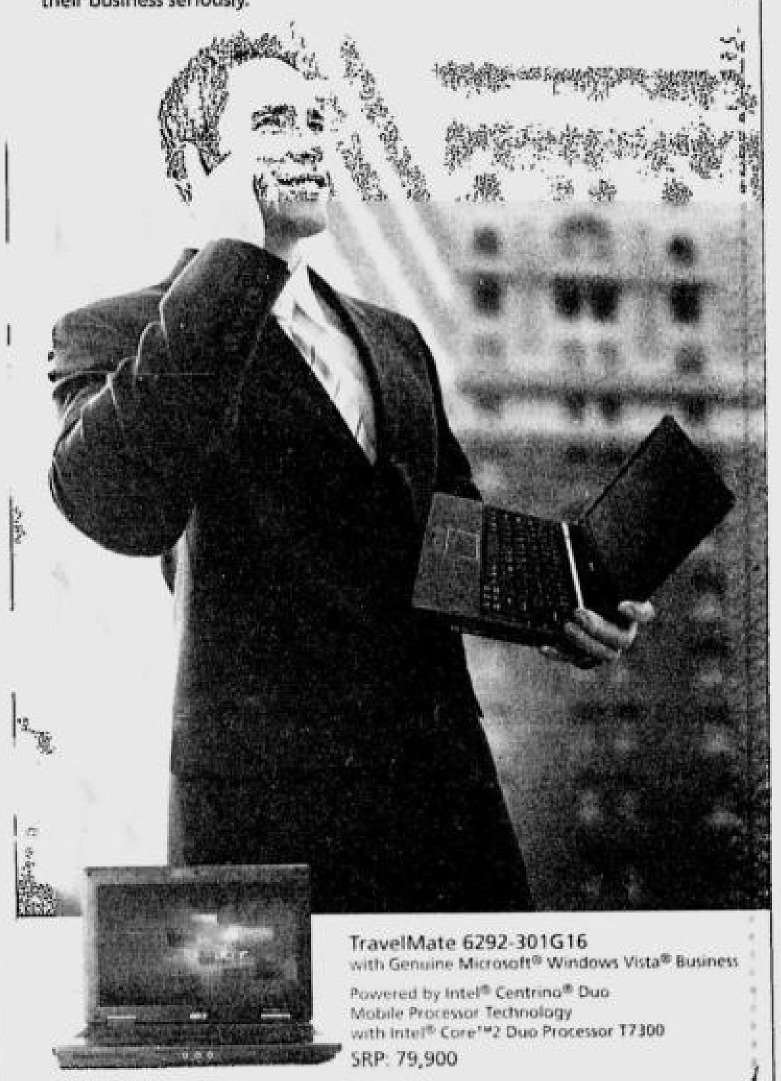

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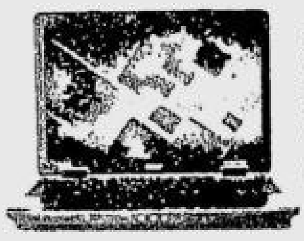
SRP: 79,900



TravelMate 4720-301G16
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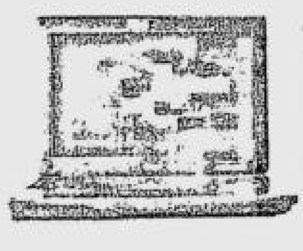
Mobile Processor Technology
with Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor T7300
SRP: 69,900



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Megaworld introduces best '3G' BPO facility

TOP PHILIPPINE PROPERTY DEVELOPER Megaworld Corp is set to deliver on its promise of coming up with the best-ever 3rd-generation business process outsourcing (BPO) facility in the country through the two-building One Campus Place inside the fully integrated McKinley Hill community in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.

Megaworld first vice president Jericho Go said the company decided to come out with two low-density, six-story structures for the project, instead of high-rises, as these are more attuned with the requirements of BPO firms.

As the leading developer of BPO buildings, Go said Megaworld fully understands the nitty-gritty of the industry and is ready to conform with what it requires up to the smallest detail.

For instance, Go said a low-rise facility will give a single BPO company the option to lease the whole building without putting too much strain on the firm's operating cost.

If a company opts to lease the entire structure, Go said Megaworld will give it the "naming rights" for the facility so that the building can be named after the firm, complete with the signage of the lessee.

By leasing majority of the building, on the other hand, a BPO firm will be given signage rights.

A low-density, low-rise facility like the One Campus Place will also afford a BPO firm better security and tighter control on the traffic of the people in the building, thus, shielding the company from gallivanting recruiters prevalent in high-rises where several companies converge.

"We are aware of the rampant cases of poaching of employees in the BPO industry so helping our lessees get rid of this problem is one of the major things that we considered in planning for the make-up of One Campus Place," Go declared.

Also, by building a low-rise facility, Go said Megaworld has more window to invest further in the amenities, including the lush landscaping and other structural details to make it the best location there is for a BPO company.

The One Campus Place buildings, which have 10,600 square meters each of office space, have larger floor plates and wide stairwells that will help the lessee save on energy cost as people will be enticed to take the stairs in going up and down while talking with three of their friends side-by-side.

Its railings are made of stainless steel and the floors and marble and tile-finished.

While relaxing during breaks, the BPO executives and personnel can immediately leave behind the job strains and get a laid back feel with the invigorating landscaping consisting of greeneries, benches and trellises.

"The landscaping aids in reenergizing the employees and executives as the sun and wind are not obstructed by high-rise structures. An urban jungle like Makati adds up to the stress. In One Campus Place, we want to change the people's mindset that to relax in-between work sessions is to smoke. What we promote, instead, is a few minutes off amidst nature," Go noted.

The facility, which will be finished in 10 months, will also have a multi-purpose court (for basketball, volleyball, badminton, tennis) that can be used for team gatherings/building sessions. Since the McKinley Cyberpark where the One Campus Place is located is already accredited by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, locators there are automatically qualified for various incentives like income tax holidays, an option to pay the lower 5-percent tax on gross income, and duty-free importation of capital equipment, among others.

Interested BPO locators may inquire about One Campus Place at McKinley Hill Cyberpark by calling 912-0708 or e-mailing jcespinosa@megaworldcorp.com.

QUISUMBING TORRES LAWYER AT LAUNCH OF PRIMER ON RP MINERALS INDUSTRY

Lawyer Leo G. Dominguez, head of the mining and natural resources practice group of Quisumbing Torres, with other Philippine mining experts Philip Romualdez, president of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines and Horacio Ramos, Director of Mines and Geosciences Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, were guest speakers at the launching of the German language version of the 'Primer on the Philippine Minerals Industry' at the KfW-Ipex Bank (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau) in Frankfurt upon invitation of the Philippine Ambassador to Germany Delia Domingo-Albert in her capacity as Vice Chair on the Minerals Development Council in cooperation with the KfW-Ipex Bank, a member of the KfW bank group and a major German player in the international project and export finance. This is the first time that all relevant and updated information on the Philippine mining industry is available in the German language. The publication of the Primer is aimed towards reaching out to European financial institutions, as well as potential investors utilizing environmentally sound technology and expertise. The Primer is published by Quisumbing Torres, a member firm of Baker & McKenzie International. Shown, from left, are Dietrich Tschoepke, Honorary Consul General professor Dr. Gerhard Zeidler, Venus Tan, Rosalie Evangelista, Stephan Pueschel, lawyer Dominguez, Ambassador Domingo-Albert, Holger Apel, Wolfgang Behler, Romualdez, Ramos, and Loredanna Hess.

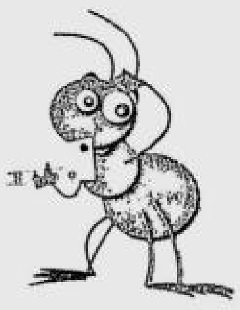
DiabetEASE launches contest

TO CELEBRATE ITS SECOND ANNIVERSARY, DiabetEASE magazine launches the "Name the Ant" contest to give its readers a chance to name the magazine's resident ant mascot.

DiabetEASE magazine is accepting entries until Sep. 15 for the contest. Cash and freebies, including free one-year subscription to DiabetEASE magazine await the lucky winner.

Those interested to join the contest may send their entries via snail mail to Suite 502 Narra Building, 2276 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City, or e-mail feedback@fame.ph. To know more about this contest, call 892-0723 to 24 local 19.

DiabetEASE is a bi-monthly glossy magazine for people with diabetes, their families and the public in general. The magazine is available in all National Bookstore outlets nationwide.

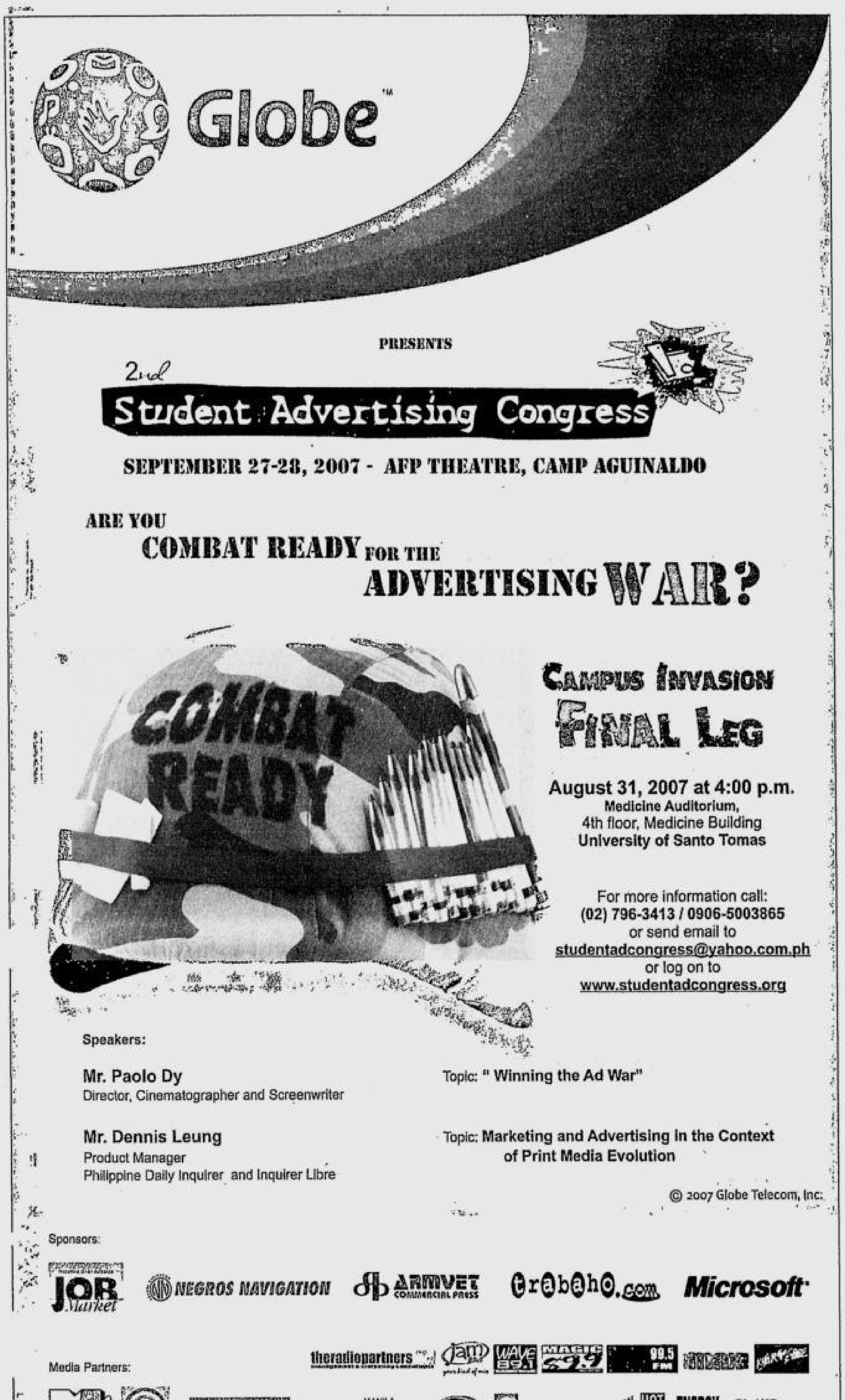


SEAIR AT CENTURY TUNA SUPERBODS 2007

Southeast Asian Airlines (Seair) was the official airline of the recently concluded Century Tuna Superbods 2007. Seair brought to Boracay guest celebrities and personalities, as well as the contestants of the image model search, who were vying for a chance to become Century Tuna's next male and female image models. Seair also sponsored the Joust Challenge in the celebrity beach games, where winners received free round-trip tickets to Boracay. Besides the most-awaited competition, the event also featured hot parties, fun beach activities and great raffle prizes to beach lovers. Shown are the grand finalists of the Century Tuna Superbods 2007 during their arrival in Caticlan Airport.

P&A SIGNS EMERGING PROPERTY DEVELOPER

Leading audit and accounting firm Punongbayan & Araullo (P&A) was recently engaged by Woodridge Properties Inc as the property firm's external auditor on record. P&A was also mandated to commence due diligence on Woodridge in preparation for plans to go public. Shown immediately following the signing ceremony are (seated from left) Gregorio Navarro, P&A managing partner and CEO; engineer Ernesto Matugas, president and CEO of Woodridge Properties Inc, and Conrad Gloria, executive vice president of SB Capital Investments Corp. Standing, from left, are Francis Albalate and Ma. Isabel Comedia, P&A partners; Emmanuel Jose Santos, Woodridge Investments Corp COO and Manuel San Diego, SB Capital Investments director.



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E-mail Address: bac_bicolmed@yahoo.com.ph
Fax No. (054) 473-89-36
Website: http://www.doh.gov.ph/bmc/index.htm

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The **BICOL MEDICAL CENTER**, through General Appropriations Act intends to apply specified sum of **PESOS ELEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED NINETY-TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED SIXTY ONLY (PhP 11,592,660.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract to payment under the contract for **PROCUREMENT OF VARIOUS MEDICAL AND OTHER HEALTH RELATED EQUIPMENT (IAEB No. 2007-16).**

Sale of Bid Documents	August 31 to September 7, 2007
Pre-Bid Conference	September 7, 2007 – 9:00 A.M., BMC Library
Bid Opening	September 19, 2007 – 9:00 A.M., BMC Library
Price of Bid Documents	TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (PhP2,500.00)

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

2. The **BICOL MEDICAL CENTER** now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the above stated project. Deliveries of the goods are stated on the schedule of requirements.

The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine his responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **BICOL MEDICAL CENTER** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **8:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon; 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.**, except weekends and Holidays.

5. A complete set of Bidding Document for the project may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee as stated above. The method of payment will be in the form of Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative

6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address, date and time stated above. The bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms, in the amount at least equal to and not lower than a percentage of the ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency:

1. **Cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit**	**(1% of ABC)**
2. **Bank guarantee**	**(1.5% of ABC)**
3. **GSIS Surety Bond**	**(2.5% of ABC)**

Late bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representative/s who choose to attend at the address below.

8. The **BICOL MEDICAL CENTER** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Contact Address : BICOL MEDICAL CENTER
Concepcion Pequeña, Naga City
Telephone Nos. (054) 473-8936
E-mail Address: bac_bicolmed@yahoo.com.ph
Fax No. (054) 473-8936
Website: http://www.doh.gov.ph/bmc/index.htm

Contact Person : JENSY S. ONG, MD, FPOA
Chairman

(Sgd.) JENSY S. ONG, MD, FPOA
Chairman

(PDI–August 31, 2007)

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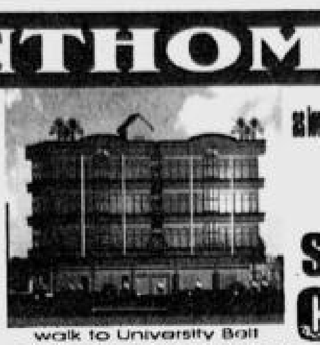

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Telephone Nos. 893-6001 to 47 local 2104
Direct Line: (632) 840-1614 / Fax No.: (632) 840-1619

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC), through its approved Corporate Budget for CY2007 intends to apply the sum of **Philippine Peso Twenty Five Million (Php 25,000,000.00)** being the **Approved Budget for Contract (ABC)** to payments under the contract for the **RESTORATION OF PNOC EC ENERGY SUPPLY BASE SHORELINE PROTECTION (271 Linear Meters)/BX07-1240** (the "Project") located in Mainaga, Mabini, Batangas. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

PNOC EC now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for the Restoration of PNOC EC Energy Supply Base Shoreline Protection. Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Interested Bidders must submit their LOIs on or before 4:00 P.M. of September 14, 2007 to PNOC EC BAC Secretariat, Bldg. 1, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City and secure the Eligibility Documents upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **Pesos: Five Hundred (Php500.00)**. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents on *September 17, 2007 at 3:00 P.M.* at the above address. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only Bids from eligible Bidders will be opened. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 a contract will only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat (c/o Ms. Benilda C. Baniqued/ Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting September 21, 2007 at the above address and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **Pesos: Five Thousand (Php5,000.00)**. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative.

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, **PNOC EC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference for all Eligible Bidders on *September 25, 2007 @ 9:00 A.M. at PNOC EC Energy Supply Base, Mainaga, Mabini, Batangas.***

Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before ***2:00 P.M. of October 8, 2007***. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on *October 8, 2007, at 2:15 P.M. in PNOC EC Conference Room, Bldg. 1, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.*

Completion of the Works is required by *One Hundred Fifty (150) Calendar Days.*

PNOC EC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Chairman
Bids and Awards Commitee

Note: PNOC EC (Manila) Cashier Transaction is from 3:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

(PDI–August 31, 2007)

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

LEILA G. DE ASIS

ANETTE P. LACSON

RYAN PATRICK SOLIMAN

Notice is hereby given that the above-mentioned persons whose pictures appear above, are accused of the crime of estafa in Criminal Case No. 15147 pending before Branch 42 of the Regional Trial Court of San Fernando, Pampanga. They are also accused of the crime of falsification of commercial documents in Criminal Cases Nos. 06-6226 and 06-6227 pending before the 2nd Municipal Circuit Trial Court of Mexico-San Luis, Mexico, Pampanga. They are the subjects of outstanding warrants of arrest. Positive information leading to their arrests shall be rewarded. Please contact Atty. Pagan N. Arches of the Poblador Bautista and Reyes Law Offices, through telephone number (632) 893-7623.

(PDI – August 31, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU
DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1116
Telephone Nos.: 925-47-93 to 97
Email: emb@emb.gov.ph
Visit us at http://www.emb.gov.ph

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

on the **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) for the Proposed Isabela Nickel Mining Project**

Notice is hereby given to all parties who wish to give their opinion regarding the proposed **Isabela Nickel Mining Project** to attend a Public Hearing scheduled on September 22, 2007 @ 10:00 AM at Municipal Gymnasium, Dinapigue, Isabela.

This Public Hearing will be conducted concerning the review of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of the aforementioned Project by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

All interested parties who wish to attend or participate in this Public Hearing should first register in person or by mail with the **EMB at DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman Quezon City** c/o Ms. Esperanza A. Sajul, OIC-Chief, Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Division or with the Environmental Management Bureau Region II (Tuguegarao City, Cagayan Valley) at telephone number (078) 844-4321, prior to the said hearing.

Individual and/or organizations may give their opinion in a concise position paper submitted to the EMB/EMB Region II on or before September 22, 2007.

For more details, please contact the EIA Division of EMB through Mr. Ernesto B. Villalva at telephone nos. (02) 920-2240 to 41 or email at emb@emb.gov.ph.

(PDI – August 24 & 31, 2007)

LA/MAT 15245/2007 (DP30)
FCMC 4479/2007

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE
HONGKONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
MATRIMONIAL CAUSES NO. 4479 OF 2007

BETWEEN

MARLITA S. ONGUE Petitioner
Also known as ONGUE, MARLITA
SUMONDONG

And

LITO G. SAJA Respondent

A DIVORCE PETITION HAS BEEN FILED AGAINST THE UNDER-MENTIONED LITO G. SAJA, whose address is unknown, may apply at the Family Court Registry at M2, Wanchai Law Court, No.12 Harbour Road, Hong Kong SAR for a copy of the Petition. If within one month he has not communicated with the Registry, the Court may hear the case in his absence.

Register

To be advertised as follows : –

Once in Philippine Daily Inquirer, a newspaper published and circulating in Philippines.

(PDI – August 31, 2007)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

MARIA EDNA MACAJELOS ESPACIO & LORNA BUENAVENTURA SY

This to inform the public that **MARIA EDNA MACAJELOS ESPACIO & LORNA BUENAVENTURA SY,** whose picture appears above, are no longer connected with **CANYON WOODS RESIDENTIAL RESORT,** including its all affiliates project effective July 30, 2007 & August 24, 2007 respectively.

Please be informed that our company will not honor any transaction made by them on or behalf after the said dates.

(PDI – Aug. 31 & Sept. 2, 2007)

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OBITUARIES

Our Dearly Beloved

Engr. Reynold "BOBOT" F. Rodriguez

(Mayor, Sta. Ana, Cagayan 1988–1998)
Of Sta. Ana, Cagayan

Peacefully joined the Lord on
August 20, 2007 at the age of 50.

His loving wife **Engr. Emma**; children **Charissa Carmela, Eunice Angela, Kristine Marie, Reynold Anthony Mark, Joanna Bernice**; mother **Consolacion**; brothers and sisters **Dra. Corazon** & husband **Elmo Bilbao, Elsie, Dr. Nelson** & wife **Cyd Arroyo Rodriguez, Mayor Norberto Victor** and wife **Pinky Salvanera Rodriguez**; nephews and nieces, grandnephews and nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state in Sta. Ana, Cagayan.

Interment will be on 02 September 2007 at the Sta. Ana Catholic Cemetery @ 8:30 a.m., after the Mass at Sta. Ana Catholic Church.

"Even
when I
walk
through a
dark valley,
I feel no
harm. For
you are at
my side,
your rod
and staff
give me
courage,.."
Psalm 23:4

"To Jesus Through Mary"

JOCELYN "JOSIE" SANTIAGO y STA. MARIA

peacefully joined her Creator
on the 27th of August 2007 at the age of 50.

Her bereaved husband, lawyer **Renato**; children **Renalyn, Joyce, Aina** and **Rejesa**; sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state in Purok 3, Bambang, Bulacan, Bulacan.

Interment will be on September 2, 2007, after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the San Isidro Labrador Church, Bulacan.

Rosario "Chayong" Roxas vda. de Gregorio

returned peacefully to the embrace of our Lord
on the 30th of August, 2007 at the age of 91.

Her loving husband **Dr. Laureano Gregorio Sr.** (†);
her children **Nina** and **Dr. Edor Padiernos, Zonnie** and **Arch. Kit Villarica,**
Jun and **Annie Avelino Gregorio** and **Beybie Gregorio**

Grandchildren:
Edward Padiernos, Gee-Ann Padiernos;
Charissa and **Paolo Mendoza; Cheryl Villarica**
Cereb Gregorio, Marru Gregorio and **Gari Gregorio**

Great-grandchild:
Matthew Francis Mendoza

Sisters:
Josefina Roxas de Reyes (†) and **Lucia Roxas de Juan** (†)

nephews and nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence in Poblacion 2, Marilao, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Sunday, the 2nd of September 2007 at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Requiem Mass at St. Michael the Archangel Church.

More Classified Ads

Development Bank of the Philippines	A8
Department of Labor-NCR	B4
Securities and Exchange Commission	B4
Municipality of Vintar	B4
Bicol Medical Center	B6

To engage or not

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez
Contributor

COMMENTARY

THERE IS A CHINESE SYMBOL THAT stands for danger. But reverse it and it now stands for opportunity.

Many from the government see the RP-China Farm Agreements signed last February 2007 during the visit of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao as opportunity. Others from the peasant sector see these agreements as danger.

However, they are like the Chinese symbol. They can either be opportunity or danger, depending on whether our agricultural stakeholders engage our government on these agreements' terms and conditions, which are still to be formulated.

RP-China agreements

When the national media carried news about these agreements, there was a howl of protest, specially from the small farmer sector. This was because some of the media had given the wrong impression that the Philippine government had agreed to lease two million hectares to the Chinese for products solely for the Chinese market.

They were incensed because we were not going to develop our agriculture for ourselves, and endanger our food security besides. But what infuriated them most was that they were never consulted on an issue that would severely impact their lives.

Below is a list of five of the 18 signed agreements.

Danger

Last Aug. 21, chair Jaime Regalario of the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya reported to the Weekly Forum of the Management Association of the Philippines-AgriBusiness and Countryside Development Foundation (MAP-ABCD) that some of the private sector signatories had registered their corporations only after the agreement was signed, while others were not even registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

He also brought to the forum a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo signed by some DAR officials. Four of their questions are quoted here: "Where will the government get two million hectares?... Is there no land shortage in the country?... Why surrender the management of the lands and fishery resources to the Chinese?... How come there is total news blackout before the signing and no public consultation before, during and after the signing?"

Opportunity

Indeed, the way Regalario described it, the RP-China agreements spelled danger. But at the same meeting, former Congressman Rene Diaz saw these agreements as opportunities for investments, technology and markets.

A look at the five agreements above show this may be possible, provided that the agreements' terms and conditions serve our national interest.

Moi Go of the DA's China Trade Desk said that some media reports were wrong, like the allegation that the products to be produced would be primarily for the China market.

Since the terms and conditions have not been formulated, we do not know who is right or wrong. Therein lies the question of whether the private sector stakeholders should engage the government on this issue.

Not engaging can result in terms and conditions detrimental to our national interest, certainly a serious potential danger.

But if people such as Regalario constructively engage the government in this area, these agreements can become opportunities.

Examples of nonnegotiable terms and conditions are that domestic needs should be served first, transfer of technology should be required, our farmers should be empowered, and that a prescribed maximum limit should be set for the Chinese to have access to our domestic credit so as not to crowd out our agri-industrial entrepreneurs.

While "the devil is in the detail," the angel can replace him with engagement. In a prior three-hour meeting, DA officials told Alyansa Agrikultura leaders that the agreements' terms and conditions had not yet been formulated, and that agriculture stakeholders' help in formulating them would be welcome.

INDICATIVE RP-CHINA FARM AGREEMENTS

MOA / MOU TITLE	PHILIPPINE SIGNATORY (G for government or P for Private)	CHINA SIGNATORY (G for government or P for Private)
1. Development of 1 million hectares of Land for Hybrid Corn, Rice, and Sorghum	Dept. of Agriculture - DA (G) Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources - DENR (G) Dept. of Agrarian Reform - DAR (G)	People's Governmen of Jilin (G) China Devt. Bank (G Jilin Fuhua Agricultur Science and Technolo Devt. Co. Ltd. (P)
2. Renewable Energy Project (40,000 ha of land for sugarcane and cassava)	DA (G), DENR (G), and DAR (G)	Agricultural Dept. of t Guangxi Zuang Autonomous Region
3. Provision of a 5,000-sq m Space for Philippine Tropical Fruits in the Jiangnan Fruit and Vegetable Wholesale Market	DA (G)	Guangzhou Jiangna Fruit and Vegetable Wholesale Market Devt Co. Ltd. (joint G and P)
4. Joint Venture Agreement On Fisheries	Philippine Marine Technology Group Inc. (P)	Shandong Gaolu Co. Ltd (P)
5. Establishment of a 35- ha Demonstration Farm for Sweet Corn	DA (G)	Guangdong Academy Agricultural Sciences

With this invitation, the decision should be to engage.

If the engagement fails, the strongest opposition is recommended. But if it succeeds, the RP-China agreements, like the Chinese symbol for danger, can be transformed into a promising opportunity for more investments, newer technologies, wider markets and a brighter future people.

(The author is Agriwatch chair, Cabinet secretary for Presidenti ship Programs and Projects, and undersecretary for agriculture, an and industry. For inquiries and tions, email agriwatchphil @yah or telefax (02) 8522112).

ATR-Kim Eng in early win against ex-partner

By Daxim L. Lucas

PUBLICLY LISTED ATR-KIM ENG Financial Corp. on Thursday said that it had made headway in its efforts to collect on the case it had filed against businessman Carlos Araneta, winning over $25 million in damages.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, ATR-Kim Eng director and executive vice president Renato Leveriza Jr. said that the US Bankruptcy Court in the Northern District of California issued an order last Aug. 22, 2007 authorizing the bankruptcy trustee to make an interim distribution from the cash recovered from Hugo Bonilla to ATR-Kim Eng of $530,000 or about P25 million.

"We expect to receive the said amount sometime this week," Leveriza said in a statement.

In December 2006, the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware ruled in favor of ATR-Kim Eng in its case against LBC chair Carlos Araneta, LBC Bank president Liza Berenguer, and LBC USA president Hugo Bonilla for "waste and breach of fiduciary duty" over the disappearance of substantial assets of LBC Global Corp., the Delaware-based holding company of the LBC Group.

The Court required them to jointly and severally pay ATR-Kim Eng the amount of $24.49 million in damages and pre-judgment interest, plus post-judgment interest and collection costs.

The Delaware judgment was subsequently registered in the Alameda County Superior Court for enforcement, resulting in the attachment of $544,000 from the accounts of Bonilla in Mission National Bank in San Francisco, California.

Bonilla has since filed for bankruptcy.

In the same disclosure, Leveriza also told the PSE that the bankruptcy trustee in the Bonilla bankruptcy case had also filed a fraudulent transfer complaint against Monica Araneta, the only daughter of Araneta, to whom Bonilla transferred a multimillion dollar Hillsborough property for the sum of only $100.

Leveriza also said that the US court has issued orders that monitor and control the transfer and conveyance of shares and assets of LBC Holdings USA Corp. "in aid of judgment enforcement proceedings."

The Court is also closely monitoring Araneta's ownership in Mission National Bank, the statement said.

DOF refuses to lower '08 target of Customs bureau

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE said it could not grant the request of the Bureau of Customs to lower its collection target for 2008.

According to a finance official involved in the setting of revenue targets, the BOC is expected to implement measures to improve efficiency of its revenue collection.

Therefore, even if the peso were to strengthen further, the BOC with its improved efficiency should be able to meet its target collection.

"The peso is not the only consideration in setting a target," the finance official said. "The government spends so that efficiency of its agencies improve. (Additional) revenue from improved efficiency should therefore offset lost potential revenue due to stronger peso."

Earlier, the BOC has requested the DOF to lower its collection target for 2008, from P254 billion to P245 billion, citing projections of economic managers that the peso would be stronger than originally expected.

In a letter to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales noted that the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) raised its peso-dollar exchange rate assumption from 48 to 47 versus the US dollar for 2008.

The Customs official also said that the DBCC, tasked with setting the government's macroeconomic goals, trimmed its imports growth target from 13 to 12 percent, or from an absolute value of $68 billion to $65 billion.

The BOC, the second biggest revenue-generating agency after the Bureau of Internal Revenue, sources its collection from import duties.

A rise in the peso would adversely affect the BOC's revenue collection because the same dollar value of tariff is converted into less pesos.

Morales had said earlier that his office loses P2.2 billion in potential revenue collection for every unit appreciation of the peso against the US dollar. To be fair in the setting of collection targets, the BOC's goal should be consistent with the projected imports growth and exchange rate, he said.

But the finance official said that the government collection agencies are expected to plug revenue leaks arising from smuggling and tax evasion, and not simply rely on improved macroeconomic conditions for their collections to increase.

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PCCI seeks ADB funding for Asean Hotel chain

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Project expected to help push region's economic integration

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF Commerce and Industry is batting for a slice of some $1 billion in private sector financing from the Asian Development Bank to help realize the concept of an "Asean hotel" chain.

The Asean Hotel concept involves the establishment of affordable tourist accommodation facilities, where tourists can book rooms for as low as $30 a night.

PCCI president Samie Lim said in an interview the Asean Hotel project would help economic integration efforts in Southeast Asia.

"I made a pitch for this concept when I attended an ADB forum in Bangkok earlier this week," Lim said.

He was referring to ADB consultation meetings with government, private sector and civil society representatives held in Bangkok, Thailand, to review the bank's Long-Term Strategic Framework covering 2001-2015.

According to the ADB's website, the review of the LTSF would determine the organization's future direction and vision to 2020.

"ADB people gave a positive response to our Asean Hotel, but I was asked to present a more detailed study," Lim said.

He added that he was pushing for some funding through the ADB's development-oriented financing for the private sector.

"We are thinking of initially converting existing facilities into Asean Hotels rather than building new projects," the PCCI chief said.

In the Philippines, he said the goal was to establish a chain of 50 hotels with 50 to 100 rooms each.

"Another feature of the Asean Hotel that would be helpful for Asean integration is that it encourages Asean businesses to team up with one another as well as with partners from outside the region," Lim said.

Fitch Ratings improves outlook on RP banks

FITCH RATINGS HAS OBserved a further strengthening in the financial health of Philippine banks over the past 18 months, stemming from better asset quality and enhanced capitalization.

The Philippine banks' improvement in asset quality resulted from a range of factors, including the disposal of nonperforming loans (NPLs) and some foreclosed properties, rising property prices on the remainder of the foreclosed properties, greater provisioning and balance sheet growth.

Most banks have satisfactorily provided for NPLs, particularly given that deterioration in loan quality is unlikely, owing to limited loan growth in recent years and a generally benign economic outlook.

Notwithstanding favorable developments, asset quality remains a key challenge for a number of banks, and some weaker banks may need additional capital.

In terms of profitability, while the banks' margins remain high, they have been decreasing as a result of rising competition and a declining interest rate environment.

Most banks, however, continued to make substantial gains on their large holdings of long-term, fixed rate government papers.

Yet costs—albeit gradually declining—remain very high, partly due to the banks' relatively small size by assets, widespread branch networks as well as inefficiency and a lack of automation.

Meanwhile, some demand for credit is finally returning to the market after years of stagnation.

While the country's strong GDP growth of recent years has largely been driven by the low-borrowing services and the agricultural sectors, this is finally resulting in greater consumer demand which in turn is stimulating credit growth among consumers and small and medium enterprises. *Reuters*

Ruling on tender offer

From page B3

errant buyers.

The scope of the tender offer rules was recently passed upon by the Supreme Court in the case of Cemco Holdings Inc. vs National Life Insurance Co. (G.R. No. 171815, Aug. 7, 2007).

The case involves Union Cement Corp., a publicly listed company owned principally by two stockholders: United Cement Holdings Corp. (UCHC) and Cemco, at 60.51 and 17.03 percents, respectively.

The stocks of UCHC are, in turn, held by Bacnotan Consolidated Industries (21.31 percent), Atlas Cement Corp., (29.69 percent) and Cemco (9 percent).

In July 2004, Bacnotan and Atlas announced their intention to sell their UCHC shares to Cemco. Upon learning this, National Life, a minority stockholder of Union Cement, demanded from Cemco that it offer to buy its Union Cement shares pursuant to the tender offer rules.

Cemco refused. It purchased the UCHC shares in question and, as a result, became the owner, together with its earlier holdings, of 53 percent of Union Cement's stocks.

National Life filed a complaint with the Securities and Exchange Commission to nullify Cemco's purchase and asked that the tender offer rules be applied to its Union Cement shares.

The respondents argued that the tender offer rules apply only to a direct acquisition of the shares of a listed company and do not cover an indirect acquisition made through the purchase of the shares of a holding company of the listed firm.

Strict compliance

The SEC ruled in favor of National Life and ordered Cemco to make a tender offer for Union Cement shares to all shareholders. Undaunted, Cemco sought relief from the Court of Appeals. The appeal was turned down.

Cemco persisted. It brought the case to the Supreme Court.

Strike three, the tribunal dismissed Cemco's petition.

The court stated that the tender offer rules are meant "to protect minority stockholders against any scheme that dilutes the share value of their investments."

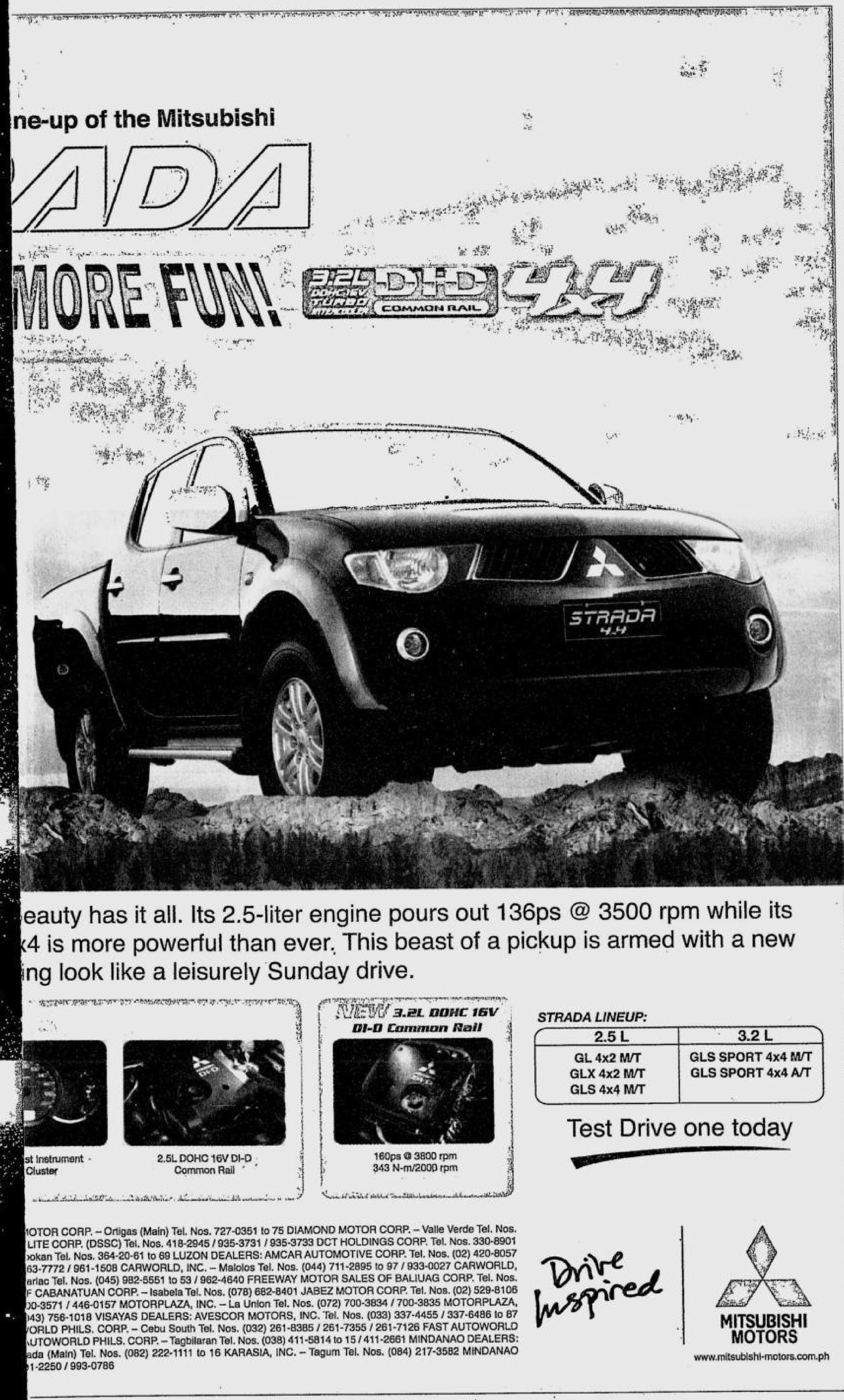
These rules give "minority stockholders the chance to exit the company under reasonable terms, giving them the opportunity to sell their shares at the same price as those of the majority shareholders."

After reviewing the minutes of the deliberations of Congress on the Code, the tribunal said that "whatever may be the method by which control of a public company is obtained, either through the direct purchase of its stocks or through an indirect means, mandatory tender offer applies."

The court agreed with the CA's view that "the bottom line of the law is to give the shareholder of the listed company the opportunity to decide whether or not to sell in connection with a transfer of control."

With the legal issue out of the way, the next question to be addressed by the parties is: At what price should Cemco buy the rest of the Union Cement shares? The same price as in 2004? Or at the prevailing market price?

No more court actions, please. *(For feedback, please write to rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.)*



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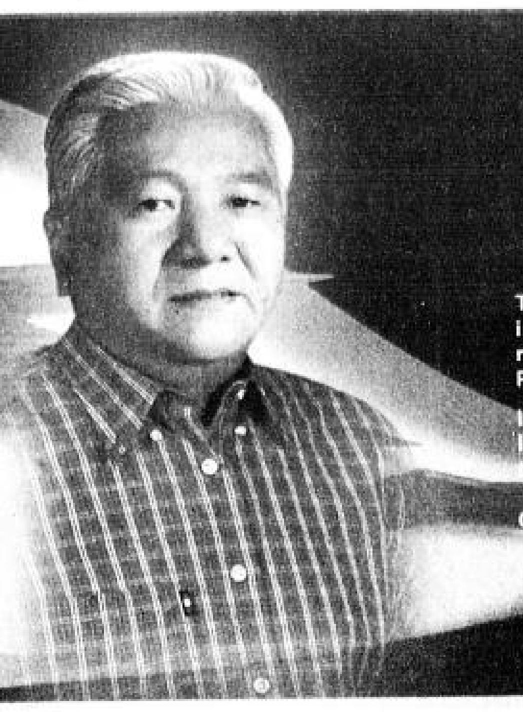

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This year, we honor eight Caviteños for their outstanding achievements in their chosen fields of endeavor. Their selection was the result of our relentless quest for excellence in achievements among citizens of the Province of Cavite.

It goes without saying that we are truly proud of their accomplishments. It is my hope that our young people emulate their deeds and follow in the footsteps of their exemplary lives.

Congratulations to our eight awardees!

AYONG S. MALIKSI
Provincial Governor

FELICE P. STA. MARIA
Rosario/Cultural Advocacy

Mrs. Sta. Maria has been an english-language non-fictionist for over 30 years. In 2001, she became a recipient of the SEA Write Award from the Kingdom of Thailand, considered Asean's most prestigious literary award. Her books have received the prominent Manila Critics Circle Award in categories ranging from art to biography, as well as recognition from the Public Relations Society of the Philippines through its Anvil Award. In addition to her writings, Sta. Maria's awarded cultural advocacies - - that presently focus on social studies, history, art, civics, and cuisine have been furthered by her current work as a Commissioner of UNESCO National Commission (for which she chairs the Social & Human Sciences Sector), and her past positions in the National Commission for Culture & the Arts, the Philippine Centennial Commission, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, International Council for Museums, and International Wine & Food Society Manila Ladies Branch. In 1990 she was knighted by the Republic of France and made a member of its elite, International Grand Order of Arts and Letters.

ATTY. DANILO P. CRUZ
Imus/Government Service

As the undersecretary for employment promotion and manpower development of the Department of Labor and Employment, Atty. Danilo p. Cruz serves as the head of the DOLE's employment cluster which is composed of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Bureau of Local Employment (BLE), National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). As such, he ensures that these agencies attain the department's key mandate of facilitating employment and harnessing and developing the country's human resources.

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PROGRAMME

5th Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Outstanding Achievement Awards Night
Friday, August 31, 2007/6:00PM,
Tagaytay International Convention Center (TICC)

6:00 P.M. Registration
6:30 P.M. Invocation...Rev. Fr. Romeo O. Ner
Parish Priest, St. Mary Magdalene
7:00 P.M. DINNER . . . . . DINNER . . . . DINNER
7:45 P.M. Entrance of Colors/entrance of Awardees
Philippine National Anthem
Opening Number
Welcome Address...Hon. Abraham N. Tolentino
Tagaytay City Mayor
Inspirational Message...Hon. Ayong S. Maliksi
Provincial Govemor
Introduction of Guest Speaker
Keynote Speech...Hon. Lito Atienza
Secretary, Department of Environment & Natural Resources
Intermission...PAHIMIS Festival Dancers & Models
Introduction of Board of Judges
Awarding of First Set of Honorees
Intermission...Ms. May Bayot
Awarding of Second Set of Honorees
Response...Mr. Peter Anthony A. Abaya
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EMCEES:
MR. JOHN SUSI & MS. ALDA LOU CABRERA

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AMEURFINA A. MELENCIO-HERRERA
Retired Associate Justice of the Supreme Court

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PETER ANTHONY AGUINALDO ABAYA
Kawit / Ecology and Environment

A highly-accomplished young man in scholestics: Harvard U. Post-graduate Executive Program in Climate Change and Development; Cornell U. Masteral in Civil and Environment Engineering: UCLA-Irvin, BS Civil Engineering and BA Economics; UP and De La Salle in his earlier years, Peter Anthony Aguinaldo Abaya is considered one of the top experts in the field of environmental engineering in the Philippines as President/CEO of the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) Alternative Fuels Corporation and, previously, Undersecretary at the Department of Energy. Peter Abaya also honed his expertise in environmental management through his work at the Office of the President and the DENR.

Two top international honors he received: The Future Leader of the Philippines 2000 by the government of Japan and the Future Leaders of the World Program by Coca-Cola Corp., USA, confirmed his reputation as an expert in environmental management.

During his stint as DOE Undersecretary, he was in charge of the management of the oil industry, deveopment of the natural gas industry, commercialization of the use of coco methyl ester (cme) or coco-diesel, ethanol and other bio-fuels, alternative fuels, the development of the country's wind power potential, other renewable energy sources including solar, hydroelectric, biomass and ocean power as well as promotion of energy efficiency and conservation.

LUIS A. FERRER IV
Gen. Trias / Government Service

The entry of dedicated young leaders in the local political arena provides great inspiration and hope for good local governance. Mayor Luis Alandy Ferrer IV of General Trias, Cavite is one such man who rose through the political ladder from the youth base of his town. Endowed with energy and vigor of a young man of 34, he served his first term as Mayor from July 2004 – June 2007 with one innovation after another and will carry on his greatest dreams as he assume office again as an unopposed mayor of General Trias.

Before he became General Trias' local chief executive, Mayor Jon-Jon as he is commonly called, was its vice mayor for one term. When he became mayor, he continued and enhanced the business-friendly atmosphere of the town and improved services for the large business community located in fast-urbanizing General Trias. Under his leadership, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry conferred on. the municipality the most business friendly LGU award in 2005.

Moreover, his initiatives and dynamism as a young leader was highly regarded by top academic institutions namely University of the Philippines (UP), De La Salle University (DLSU), Development Academy Of The Philippines (DAP), together with the local government academy and the Office of Senator Pimentel when he was conferred as one of the Outstanding Municipal Mayors in the 2006 Local Government Leadership Awards.

In return, the business community expanded their cooperation with the municipal government within the framework of Mayor Ferrer's Let's Join Forces – Bayan ng mga Volunteers' Program. In 2005 alone, Intel Technology Philippines, the world's largest microchip producer, donated Php 13 Million to Gen. Trias public elementary and high schools derived from the accumulated pool of US$50 per 20 volunteer hours served under the Volunteer Matching Grant, Program (VMGP). On its second run, SY 2006-2007, Intel was able to donate Php 16 million to the 30 public schools and 1 computer clubhouse in General Trias. To date, Gen. Trias' VMGP is the model for all other INTEL VMGPs around the world.

Furthermore, Mayor Ferrer continues to engage the volunteerism "craze" in the industries and the citizenry in general encouraging more companies to get involved with the municipality's projects and programs. He acknowledges accountability to and respond to the needs of fellow Filipinos outside of General Trias.

LANI BAYOT MISALUCHA
Amadeo/Music & Entertainment

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Born into a musical family, with parents who are operatic singers, Lani grew up immersed in song, with siblings similarly endowed with wonderful voices. Growing up and listening to the radio, she expanded her musical horizons to various genres and styles, and developed a dynamic versatility.

Lani has been in and out of the music scene since the late 1980's – as a vocalist in various bands, as a soloist in the lounge and hotel circuits, as singer for commercial jingles and multiplex tapes.

She kick-started the year 2000 with a new album, entitled "All Heart" – a collection of love songs led by its carrier single "One More Time," by Dodjie Simon.

The year 2001 became a very blessed year for Lani. She became, a semi-regular host in the Sunday noontime show SOP, along with other top artists. In September 2001, she had her first major concert at the Araneta Coleseum called "Lani Misalucha, The Crossover Live Tour." It was a highly successful concert, the venue of which Lani filled to the rafters, earned her more praises from fans and critics alike.

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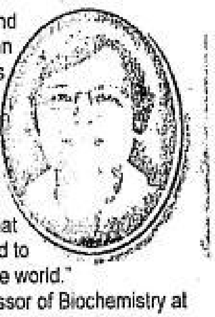
MS. LOURDES J. CRUZ
Tanza/Science & Technology



President Arroyo has conferred the rank and title of National Scientist on academician Lourdes Jansuy Cruz with all the privileges and emoluments that go with this recognition.

The President said Cruz's work "in the chemical sciences and expertise in marine toxicology is reflective of this preeminence and of the national genius that contributes to science and technology and to the progress of the Philippines and the world."

Cruz, a native of Tanza, Cavite, is a professor of Biochemistry at the Marine Science Institute of the University of the Philippines and a Research Professor at the University Of Utah. She is also the President of the Center for Biomolecular Science Foundation Inc.

Cruz's studies involving the venom of fish-hunting conus marine snails led to the use of toxins isolated from the venom of these snails as biochemical probes for examining the activities of the human brain.

She was given the award upon the recommendation of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) and the Department of Science And Technology.

Cruz is also the recipient of the NAST's Outstanding Young Scientist Award (1981), the National Research Council of the Philippines Achievement Award in Chemistry (1982) and the Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service Award for Biochemistry (1986).

ATTY. JOEL G. TINITIGAN
Rosario/Law & Civic Service

A graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law and No. 8 bar topnotcher, Atty. Joel Tinitigan has earned an exemplary reputation as a private CPA-Law practitioner, as educator (President of Rosario Institute) and as civic leader (District Governor of Rotary International District 3810). His 12 years of involvement in the Rotary movement (he became the youngest Rotary District Governor, District 3810) confirms his unrelenting pursuit of excellence in serving, through countless community projects he initiated, the less-fortunate in our midst.

While serving as President of The Rotary Club of Rosario, he was awarded as Most Outstanding Club President in RY 1997-1998 and his clun was cited for its best performance in community service garnering various awards from 1995-1998.

The Solid Cavite Clubs that he formed also received numerous awards for excellence in service from 2000-2003. As Governor of Rotary International District 3810, he has also proven his great leadership through the many recognitions he received from 1998-2001 for his outstanding performance.

The young life of Atty. Tinitigan is best described as one fully dedicated to serving his fellowmen in Cavite, whether in his role as educator, CPA-Lawyer, Boy Scout Leader, sportsman, Chairman of a multi-purpose cooperative and outstanding Rotarian.

* * *

WILFREDO B. ALICDAN
Dasmariñas / Fine Arts

Cavite is blessed in having Wilfredo B Alicdan as one of its most talented artisans. With a talent for painting since his boyhood. Wilfredo graduated from Philippine Women's University (PWU) with top honors.

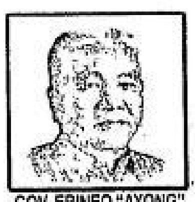
He has had the chance to host several exhibits both here and abroad that showcased his talent as an artist. Some of these are: 2003, In My Quiet Room, Red Dot Gallery, Makati; 2002, Paradeisos, Liongoren Gallery, Cubao and 1999, Giliw, Ayala Museum, Makati. Selected Group Shows: 2005. Group Show, Abode Gallery, Rhode Island, USA; 2004, Anting-anting/Matahati Joint Exhibition, Art Salon, Kuala Lumpur and National Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur; 2003, Renga (Linked – Image) Project, Workshop and Exhibition, National Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur (Represented The Philippines); 2002, Anting-anting Exhibition, Cultural Center of the Philippines and Vargas Museum; 2000, Alicdan-garibay Two-man Show, Galerlasia, Hongkong and 1990, Pilipino Portfolio, San Francisco, California. Wilfredo Alicdan was named by Gallery Genesis as its "Discovery Artist For 1992".

Alicdan, from Dasmariñas, Cavite, added another distinction for the province through his 30-piece collection which generated high reviews in the arts scene of Manila. His "Buhay Pinoy" has clean lines and colors showing minimal figures. Heads and round bodies and limbs show an influence of Columbia painter, Botero.

Alicdan's exhibit pieces reflect many of the relationships among people in the countryside. They show the much taken-for-granted daily activities like "Labandera", "Paluwas Sa Maynila" and "Galing Sa Palengke". Other slices of interaction among people dominate Alicdan's collection. His "Mag-ina", "Magkakapitbahay", and "Nananalangin" evoke warm memories made current by his treatment of his subject.

However, so much of Cavite's machismo has rubbed off on the artist's perception of life. This comes through especially in his pieces titled "Ay!" "Pahalik", and "Tampuhan".

PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS



GOV. ERINEO "AYONG" MALIKSI

VICE GOV. DENCITO "OSBOY" CAMPAÑA

CONG. JOSEPH EMILIO ABAYA
(1st District)

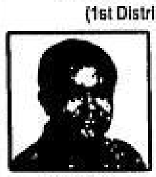
CONG. ELPIDIO BARZAGA, JR.
(2nd District)

CONG. JESUS CRISPIN REMULLA
(3rd District)

BM CESARIO DEL ROSARIO, JR.
(1st District)

BM LUIS PAGTAKHAN
(1st District)

BM RESTITUTO ENRIQUEZ
(1st District)

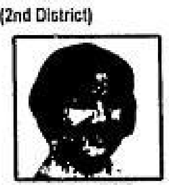


BM ALEX ADVINCULA
(2nd District)

BM ARLEEN ARAYATA
(2nd District)

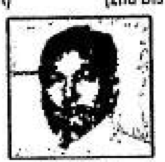
BM RECTO CANTIMBUHAN
(2nd District)

BM RAYMUNDO DEL ROSARIO
(2nd District)



BM EILEEN BERATIO
(3rd District)

BM VIRGILIO AMBION
(3rd District)



BM LOPE TEPORA
(3rd District)

BM REMIGIO DILAG
(Pres., Councilors' League)

BM THELMA MADLANSACAY
(Pres., ABC Federation)

BM SOPHIA MARIE PAGTAKHAN
(Pres., SK Federation)

GUEST SPEAKER

Hon. Lito Atienza
Secretary, Dept. of Environment
& Natural Resources

Even before his appointment as Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) head, Secretary Lito Atienza has been a prominent figure in public service. His accomplishments has been repeatedly cited even during his term as Assemblyman representing the capital city at the Batasang Pambansa, as National Housing Authority General Manager, as Vice Mayor and Presiding Officer of the City Council and as three-term Manila Mayor where he championed the Buhayin ang Maynila urban renewal and development program.

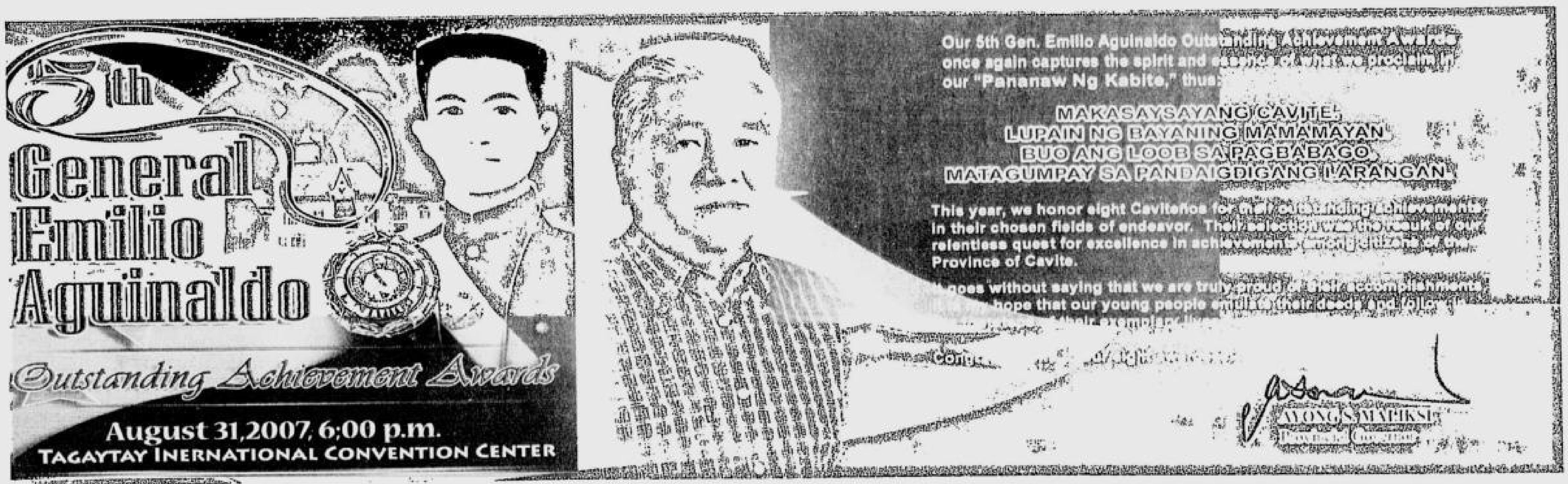
His pro-environment stance was already apparent when he was Manila's Vice Mayor and the Presiding Officer of the City Council. During that time, he successfully stopped a move to extend the Manila Bay reclamation to areas in the city, particularly the stretch from the Manila Yatch Club to the US Embassy, which would have deprived the people access to what is known to many as one of the best sunsets in the world.

As Mayor, he initiated the relocation of the oil depots in Pandacan out of Manila, and presided over the establishment of a "Green Buffer Zone" in the area which separated the fuel tanks from the community.

Furthermore, he initiated the Manila Clean and Green Project last year that involved the planting of 100,000 trees, shrubs and plants from August 2006 to December 2006.

He is a champion of effective land use planning for the benefit of the present and future generations and has tough record for impartiality enforcing laws. He also brings to the DENR the balanced perspective of someone who views people as the key partner in the preservation of a healthy environment. Truly, Secretarty Atienza is a defender of environment, a defender of life.

(Text by Mr. Beda Borjal / Lay-out by the Provincial Information & Community Affairs Department)


5th
General
Emilio
Aguinaldo
Outstanding Achievement Awards
August 31,2007, 6;00 p.m.
TAGAYTAY INERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER

Our 5th Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Outstanding Achievement Awards once again captures the spirit and essence of what we proclaim in our "Pananaw Ng Kabite," thus:

MAKASAYSAYANG CAVITE,
LUPAIN NG BAYANING MAMAMAYAN
BUO ANG LOOB SA PAGBABAGO
MATAGUMPAY SA PANDAIGDIGANG LARANGAN

This year, we honor eight Caviteños for their outstanding achievements in their chosen fields of endeavor. Their selection was the result of our relentless quest for excellence in achievements among citizens of the Province of Cavite.

It goes without saying that we are truly proud of their accomplishments. [illegible] hope that our young people emulate their deeds and follow [illegible] their exemplary lives.

Cong[illegible]

AYONG S. MALIKSI
Provincial Governor

FELICE P. STA. MARIA
Rosario/Cultural Advocacy

Mrs. Sta. Maria has been an english-language non-fictionist for over 30 years In 2001, she became a recipient of the SEA Write Award from the Kingdom of Thailand, considered Asean's most prestigious literary award. Her books have received the prominent Manila Critics Circle Award in categories ranging from art to biography, as well as recognition from the Public Relations Society of the Philippines through its Anvil Award. In addition to her writings, Sta. Maria's awarded cultural advocacies - - that presently focus on social studies, history, art, civics, and cuisine have been furthered by her current work as a Commissioner of UNESCO National Commission (for which she chairs the Social & Human Sciences Sector), and her past positions in the National Commission for Culture & the Arts, the Philippine Centennial Commission, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, International Council for Museums, and International Wine & Food Society Manila Ladies Branch In 1990 she was knighted by the Republic of France and made a member of its elite, International Grand Order of Arts and Letters.

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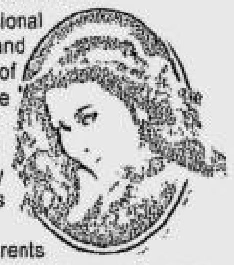

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Cavite is blessed in having Wilfredo B Alicdan as one of its most talented artisans. With a talent for painting since his boyhood Wilfredo graduated from Philippine Women's University (PWU) with top honors.

He has had the chance to host several exhibits both here and abroad that showcased his talent as an artist. Some of these are 2003, In My Quiet Room, Red Dot Gallery, Makati, 2002, Paradeisos, Liongoren Gallery, Cubao and 1999 Giliw Ayala Museum, Makati Selected Group Shows: 2005, Group Show, Abode Gallery, Rhode Island, USA; 2004, Anting-anting/Matahati Joint Exhibition, Art Salon Kuala Lumpur and National Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur; 2003, Renga (Linked – Image) Project, Workshop and Exhibition National Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur (Represented The Philippines); 2002, Anting-anting Exhibition, Cultural Center of the Philippines and Vargas Museum, 2000, Alicdan-garibay Two-man Show, Galeriasia, Hongkong and 1990 Pilipino Portfolio, San Francisco, California. Wilfredo Alicdan was named by Gallery Genesis as its "Discovery Artist For 1992 .

Alicdan from Dasmariñas, Cavite, added another distinction for the province through his 30-piece collection which generated high reviews in the arts scene of Manila. His "Buhay Pinoy" has clean lines and colors showing minimal figures. Heads and round bodies and limbs show an influence of Columbia painter, Boterc

'Alicdan's exhibit pieces reflect many of the relationships among people in the countryside. They show the much taken-for-granted daily activities like "Labandera", "Paluwas Sa Maynila" and "Galing Sa Palengke". Other slices of interaction among people dominate Alicdan's collection His "Mag-ina" "Magkakapitbahay", and "Nananalangin" evoke warm memories made current by his treatment of his subject.

However, so much of Cavite's machismo has rubbed off on the artist's perception of life. This comes through especially in his pieces titled "Ay!" "Pahalik", and "Tampuhan".

MS. LOURDES J. CRUZ
Tanza/Science & Technology

President Arroyo has conferred the rank and title of National Scientist on academician Lourdes Jansuy Cruz with all the privileges and emoluments that go with this recognition.

The President said Cruz's work "in the chemical sciences and expertise in marine toxicology is reflective of this preeminence and of the national genius that contributes to science and technology and to the progress of the Philippines and the world."

Cruz, a native of Tanza, Cavite, is a professor of Biochemistry at the Marine Science Institute of the University of the Philippines and a Research Professor at the University Of Utah She is also the President of the Center for Biomolecular Science Foundation Inc.

Cruz's studies involving the venom of fish-hunting conus marine snails led to the use of toxins isolated from the venom of these snails as biochemical probes for examining the activities of the human brain.

She was given the award upon the recommendation of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) and the Department of Science And Technology

Cruz is also the recipient of the NAST's Outstanding Young Scientist Award (1981), the National Research Council of the Philippines Achievement Award in Chemistry 1982 and the Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service Award for Biochemistry (1986).

ATTY. JOEL G. TINITIGAN
Rosario/Law & Civic Service

A graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law and No. 8 bar topnotcher, Atty. Joel Tinitigan has earned an exemplary reputation as a private CPA-Law practitioner as educator (President of Rosario Institute) and as civic leader (District Governor of Rotary International District 3810). His 12 years of involvement in the Rotary movement (he became the youngest Rotary District Governor, District 3810) confirms his unrelenting pursuit of excellence in serving through countless community projects he initiated, the less-fortunate in our midst.

While serving as President of The Rotary Club of Rosario, he was awarded as Most Outstanding Club President in RY 1997-1998 and his clun was cited for its best performance in community service garnering various awards from 1995-1998

The Solid Cavite Clubs that he formed also received numerous awards for excellence in service from 2000-2003 As Governor of Rotary International District 3810, he has also proven his great leadership through the many recognitions he received from 1998-2001 for his outstanding performance

The young life of Atty. Tinitigan is best described as one fully dedicated to serving his fellowmen in Cavite, whether in his role as educator, CPA-Lawyer, Boy Scout Leader, sportsman Chairman of a multi-purpose cooperative and outstanding Rotarian

❧

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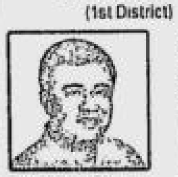
(1st District)

BM RESTITUTO ENRIQUEZ
(1st District)



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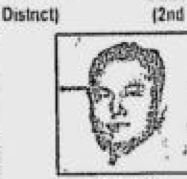

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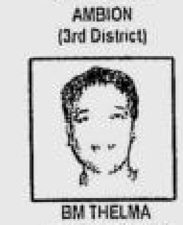

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BM SOPHIA MARIE PAGTAKHAN
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(Text by Mr Beda Borjal / Lay-out by the Provincial Information & Community Affairs Department)

GUEST SPEAKER
Hon. Lito Atienza

Secretary Dept of Environment
& Natural Resources

Even before his appointment as Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) head, Secretary Lito Atienza has been a prominent figure in public service His accomplishments has been repeatedly cited even during his term as Assemblyman representing the capital city at the Batasang Pambansa, as National Housing Authority General Manager, as Vice Mayor and Presiding Officer of the City Council and as three-term Manila Mayor where he championed the Buhayin ang Maynila urban renewal and development program.

His pro-environment stance was already apparent when he was Manila's Vice Mayor and the Presiding Officer of the City Council. During that time, he successfully stopped a move to extend the Manila Bay reclamation to areas in the city, particularly the stretch from the Manila Yatch Club to the US Embassy, which would have deprived the people access to what is known to many [illegible] of the best sunsets in the world.

As Mayor, he initiated the relocation of the oil depots in Pandacan out of Manila, and pres[illegible] over the establishment of a "Green Buffer Zone" in the area which separated the fuel tanks [illegible] the community.

Furthermore, he initiated the Manila Clean and Green Project last year that involved the planting of 100,000 trees, shrubs and plants from August 2006 to December 2006.

He is a champion of effective land use planning for the benefit of the present and future generations and has tough record for impartiality enforcing laws. He also brings to the DENR the balanced perspective of someone who views people as the key partner in the preservation of a healthy environment. Truly, Secretarty Atienza is a defender of environment, a defender of life.

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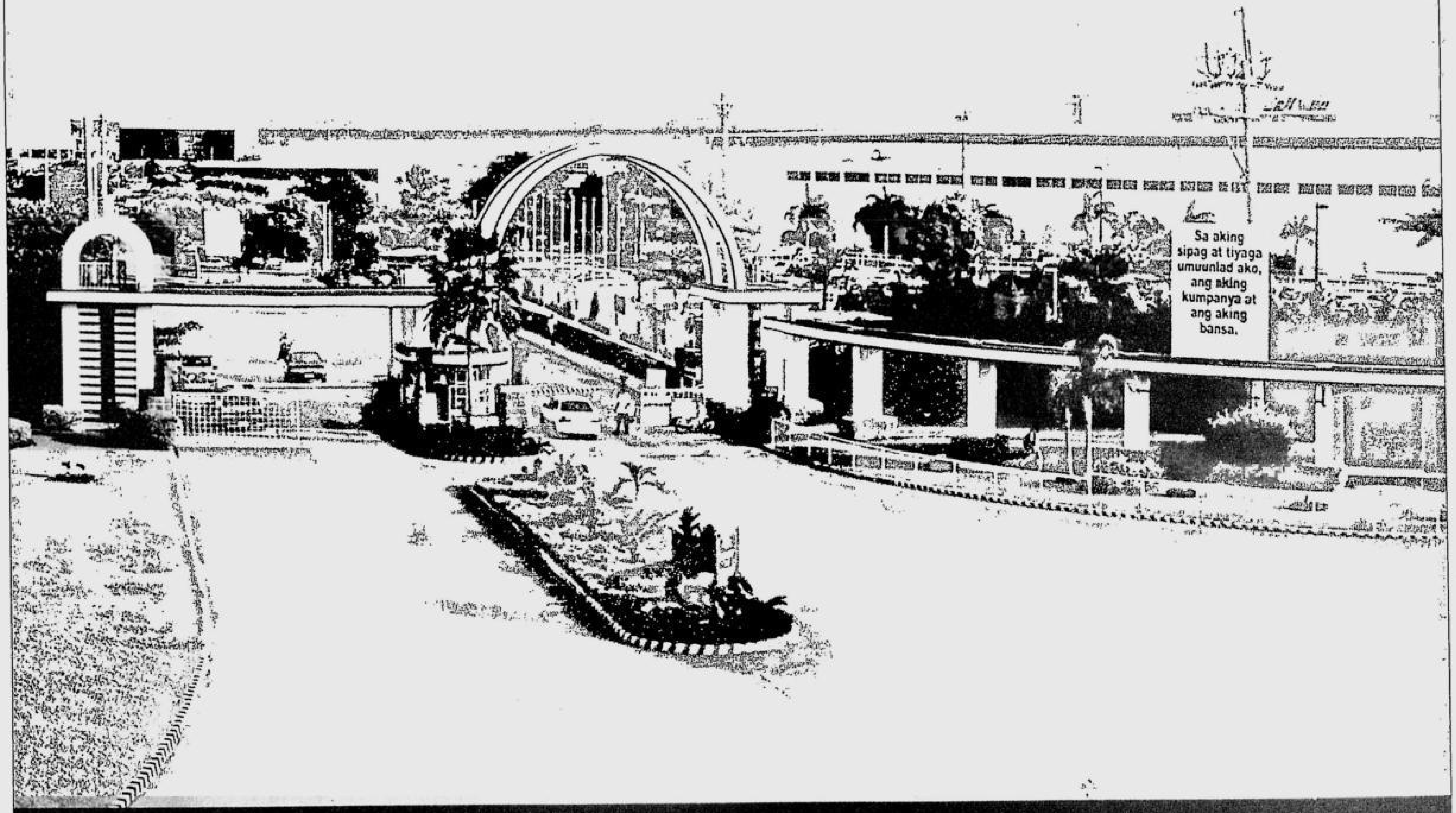
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TeleTech inaugurates Lipa Delivery Center

First BPO center in Batangas brings global jobs to the region

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal Arroyo leads the ribbon-cutting ceremony opening the 7th TeleTech Delivery Center in the country in Lipa City, Batangas. With the President are from left: Batangas Congressman Mark Leandro Mendoza, DTI Secretary Peter Favila, TeleTech vice president and general manager Maulik Parekh, and Lipa City Mayor Oscar Gozos.

GOVERNMENT officials and TeleTech executives led by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, unveil the commemorative marker inside the TeleTech Lipa Delivery Center.

TeleTech, one of the largest global providers of business process outsourcing solutions, officially opened its seventh delivery center and the first BPO center in Batangas on August 29. The TeleTech Lipa delivery center brings thousands of jobs to the region, which is poised to become part of the government's cyber corridor plan.

More than a thousand employees from Batangas, Cavite, Laguna and neighboring provinces are currently enjoying the benefits of working at the TeleTech Lipa delivery center, a world-class facility with employee-friendly amenities located at Robinsons Place, Lipa City, Batangas.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who led the inauguration ceremonies of the first contact center in Batangas, acknowledged the contribution of TeleTech in helping boost the country's BPO industry and providing skills development for Filipinos, particularly those in the provinces. TeleTech currently supports more than 12,000 employees in 10 large BPO centers across the country.

"As the largest and fastest growing BPO provider in the Philippines today, we remain optimistic and bullish about the future of our industry here and we appreciate the support of President Arroyo's government. We are looking at further growing our employee force to 15,000 by the end of 2007," said TeleTech vice president and general manager Maulik Parekh.

Occupying three floors of the Robinsons mall, TeleTech Lipa occupies more than 7,000 square meters and houses close to 1,000 workstations. TeleTech Lipa employees enjoy workplace conveniences such as fully equipped training and meeting rooms, a game room, a DSL laboratory, a library, clean sleeping rooms and shower rooms. Employees also benefit from a large full-service cafeteria that is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

TeleTech, a company known for providing lifestyle programs to its employees, also provides plenty of opportunities for professional development. To date, over 150 supervisors at TeleTech Lipa have completed and passed supervisor certification courses, equipping them for success as career professionals. At this site, more than 100 employees have been promoted or given expanded roles in the organization within the past year.

TeleTech Lipa delivery center has also entered into a partnership with Lyceum of Batangas to customize student and curriculum development for careers in the BPO industry. Through the partnership, TeleTech helps prepare future generations of Batangas residents for jobs in companies like TeleTech. For its part, Lyceum has allocated a laboratory to house training sessions and will be incorporating TeleTech development courses as electives in the school's mass communication program.

TeleTech is by far the fastest growing BPO company in the Philippines, a fact recently recognized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Business Processing Association of the Philippines and other organizations at the International ICT Awards Manila 2007. In April, TeleTech also won the Outstanding Employer Award given by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza).

These awards emphasize the significant contributions to job generation and economic development that a global company like TeleTech brings.

Occupying three floors of the Robinsons mall, TeleTech Lipa occupies more than 7,000 square meters and houses close to 1,000 workstations

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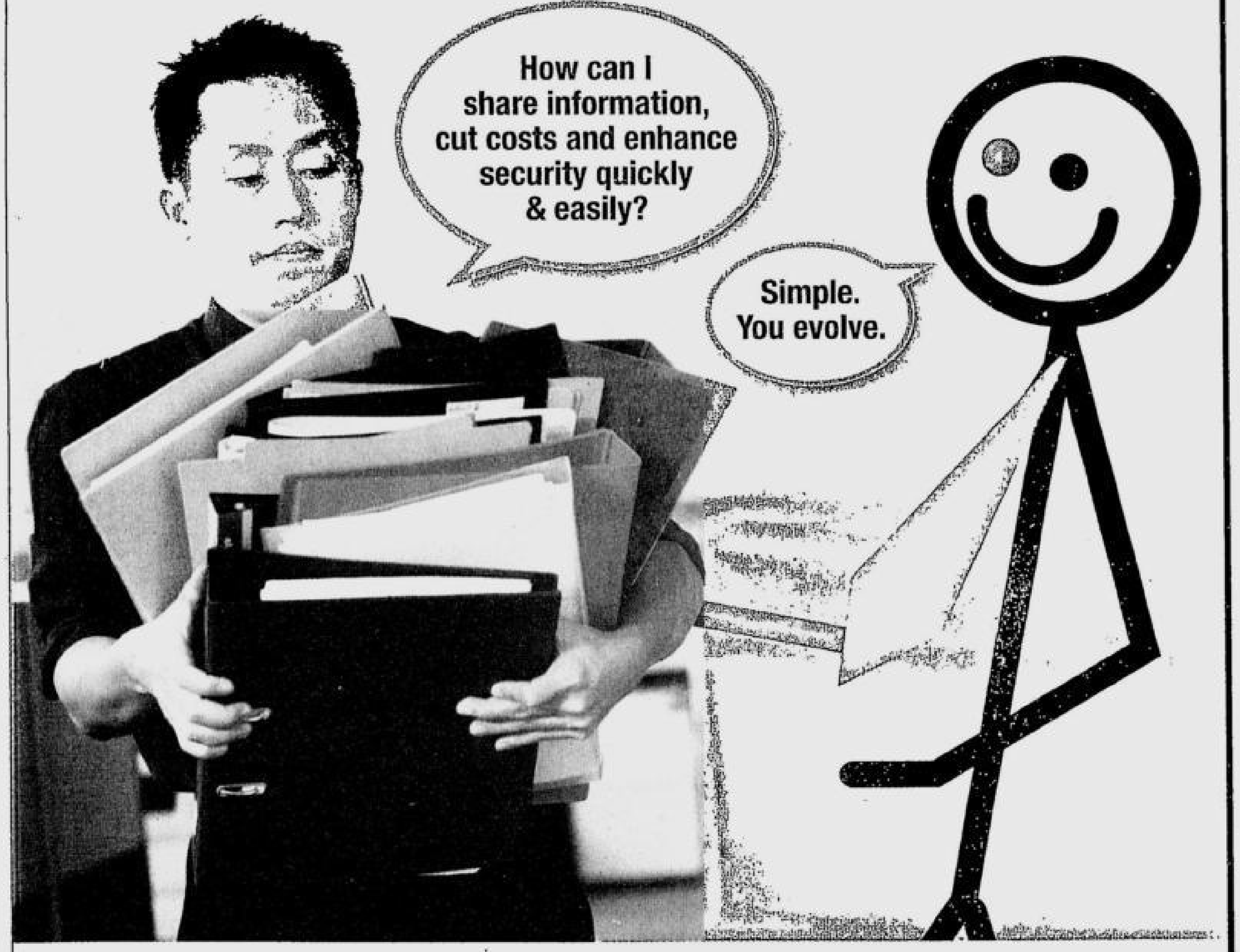
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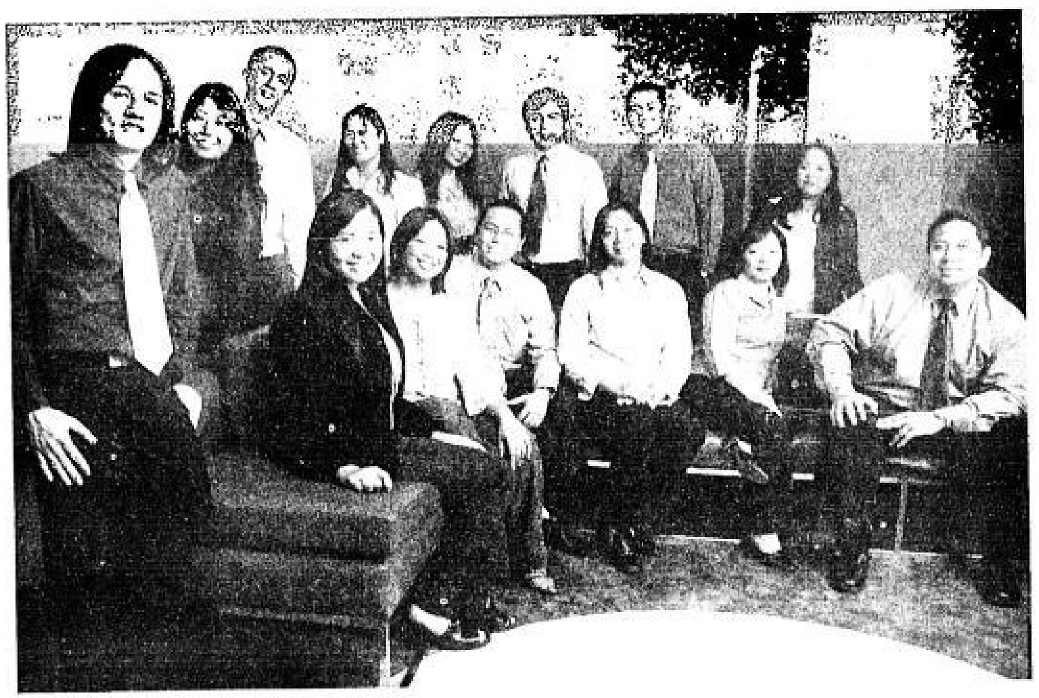
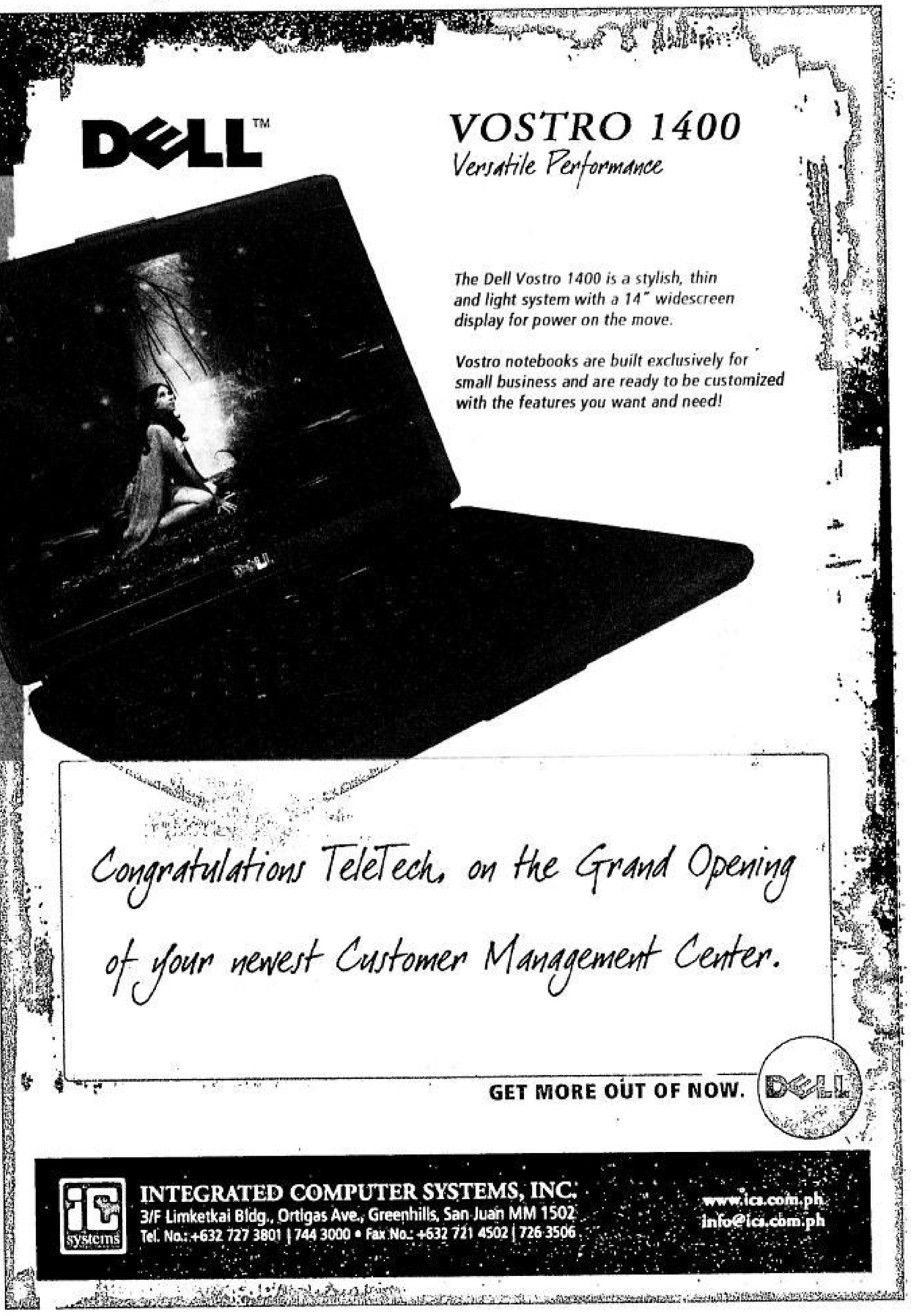
'As the largest and fastest growing BPO provider in the Philippines today, we remain optimistic and bullish about the future of our industry here and we appreciate the support of President Arroyo's government'

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and Governor Vilma Santos Recto, pose for a souvenir photo with the employees of the TeleTech Lipa Delivery Center during the inauguration of TeleTech's seventh delivery center in the country.



TELETECH Lipa's Center Leadership Team led by site director Nicki Agcaoili (extreme left).



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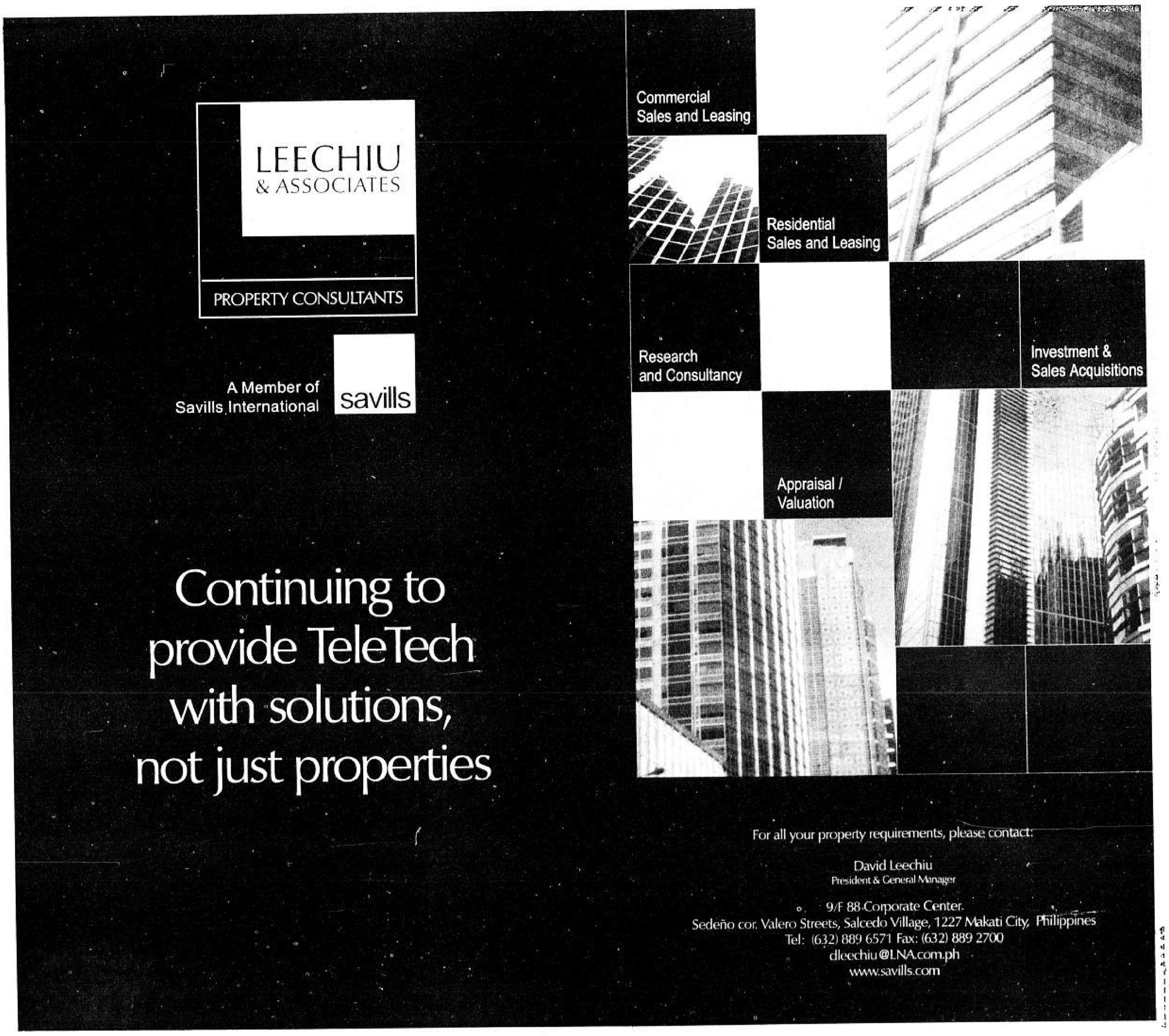

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Batangas beckons to call center firms

In Lipa City, 2 new business process outsourcing facilities set up shop

By Marlon Alexander Luistro
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LIPA CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo opened here on Wednesday new facilities owned by two of the country's largest business process outsourcing firms, Advanced Contact Solutions Inc. and Teletech Holdings Inc., saying they would enable Batangueños to conquer the world without leaving the comforts of home.

In her speech, the President said that, next to Batangas' native products, Batangueño professionals are the province's leading export, primarily due to their grace, grit and persuasion.

"It is said that all the products and good things Batangas are known for start with letter B—*balisong, barako, baka, bulalo, bagoong* ... To this menu, we can add another B—business process outsourcing," Arroyo said hours after inaugurating Teletech's seventh BPO center in the country.

The new Teletech delivery center occupies three floors of Robinsons Place-Lipa. The area measures 7,000 square meters with 1,000 modular workstations.

Teletech spokesperson Christine Matriano said they were the first BPO center in Batangas province, having around 1,300 employees, 80 percent of which are local residents.

"Our success here in Lipa City proves that Teletech's unique differentiated strategy of bringing jobs to the people in the provinces is the right strategy to support the exponential growth of the BPO industry," said Teletech vice president and general manager Maulik Parekh in his speech.

Acsi has an 800-seat capacity on a single floor in SM City-Lipa with state-of-the-art facilities that provide customer service in travel, telecommunications, satellite TV, financial services and other industries.

Acsi president and chief executive officer Victor Endaya said the company now has 7,000 seats with over 6,600 employees in its six BPO centers across the country.

He added that Acsi has a distinction of being the first and only publicly listed call center in the Philippine Stock Exchange, through its mother company Paxys.

"This marks a new day for Acsi in its continuing pursuit to provide superior customer service to our clients," said Acsi board chair Tarcisio Medalla. "Acsi has grown from a 300-seat company in 2002 to over 7,000 at this time."

Ms Arroyo believes that with the new call centers, Batangueños can now practice their trade and profit from their skills within city limits.

"If this BPO needs to push products or put down a complaint, there is no better salesman than a Batangueño," the President said. "He can talk his customer into it or out of it."

Chips 'R' Us

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

THE GLOBAL MARKET FOR PROCESSED fruits, most specially the banana chips, has grown into a billion-dollar market as consumer preference leans toward more healthy organic food.

Sales for more natural food is expected to reach $100 billion in 2008, and projected to grow at 20 percent to 30 percent annually. Major markets are the United States, Canada, Singapore, China, Japan and members of the European Union, including Germany, United Kingdom and France.

The raw material for banana chips is the cardava or plantain banana variety, which is processed in various product forms such as fried, dried, vacuum fried and vacuum freeze dried chips. It is also an ingredient for breakfast cereals and trail mixes.

Majority of the country's production comes from Mindanao, which accounts for 90 percent of output. There are about 15 major companies in the region that turn out an average production capacity of 580 metric tons per day. Fifteen of the 24 largest banana chips facilities in the country is found in Mindanao.

Industry data show that the country's annual banana chips exports average close to $80 million, with the biggest shipments going to the US, Taiwan, Hong Kong and mainland China.

Davao Region is one of the largest, if not the largest, exporter of banana chips in the Philippines. According to Trade Assistant Secretary Merly Cruz, the region was able to sell $24.77 million of banana chips last year, higher by 32 percent compared with what was exported in 2005.

China's crackdown on banana chips

China's recent crackdown on banana products from the Philippines is one hard lesson that must be learned. It was fortunate that China spared banana chips shipments from Mindanao, only seizing two tons of banana chips from the country, claiming that the products contained sulfur dioxide 25 times higher than the allowable level. Still, the incident is something Mindanao producers must ponder upon.

In assuring that the shipment that was seized came from Cebu, and not Mindanao, the Trade regional offices in Davao Region and in Central Mindanao both claimed that the recall did not affect shipments from the two regions.

However, banana chips producers in Mindanao must not be complacent because the incident only pointed out that there is so much work that has to be done in order to protect their products from market manipulation and abide by world standards.

Developing the Mindanao banana chips

In its desire to really push the development of banana chips, the regional office of the Department of Trade even commissioned a private company to produce 12 variants of banana chips, and called on local producers to commercialize these variants and market them either locally or internationally.

The banana chips variants have landed on the shelves of school canteens as substitute of junk food. The regional office of the Department of Education also made a parallel move by requesting canteens in public school to do away with soda drinks and patronize banana chips.

Homegrown talent Joey Ayala also composed a song to promote bananas, considered the number one export of the region, particularly Davao del Norte which hosts the biggest banana plantations.

There is also a move to develop just ONE brand for Mindanao banana chips—a brand that would be synonymous with excellence and quality. All Mindanao banana chips will carry a single brand and packaging. This will result in better prices, increased profitability and even reduced costs, due to common marketing and promotions efforts.

Meeting the challenges

The China incident should be a wake-up call for all those involved in banana production, particularly those making banana chips.

For one thing, that should pave the way for producers to see to it that their products meet not just the minimum international standards but the highest standards attainable. In this modern world of competition, it always pays to invest in improving the quality of products for international markets.

Another issue that must be addressed is for government to help these producers look for additional markets and provide more access to financing. Just about two years ago when prices of banana chips plunged, the incident showed how vulnerable local producers were to market manipulation. But with new markets, there is an assurance that even if marketing to traditional buyers falter, exporters can run to new buyers. With additional financing, the producers can invest in new machinery and technologies.

Lastly, the government and producers must sit down and discuss how they should package the products. For example, some school canteen operators refused to sell banana chips because children will not buy. The children apparently did not find banana chips as attractive as junk food.

"The problem of packaging is what is hounding us," says one producer.

It pays to improve our products. Otherwise, the competition will just run over us.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is a strong and respected advocate for the development of the island. She is chair of Joji Ilagan Foundation, Phil. Call Centers Alliance, Mindanao Tech Voc Schools Association; Mindanao Rep, Export Development Council. Email comments jojibian2@yahoo.com)

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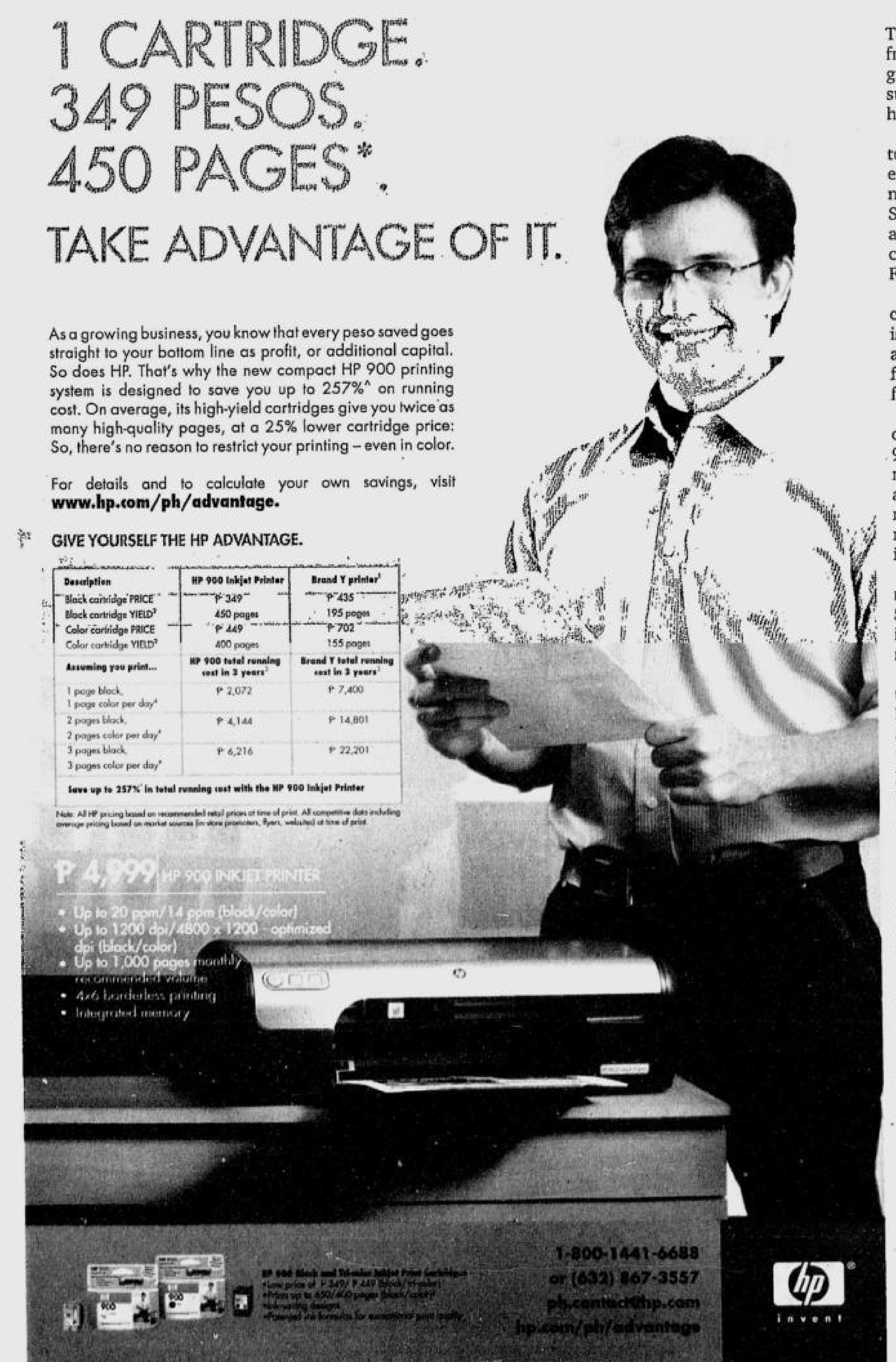

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PWDs build own lending business

Healthy folk seek help of the handicapped

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—WHO SAYS persons with disabilities (PWDs) need help? Not here, it seems.

In fact, it's the "normal" people who usually turn to the PWDs for assistance. They go to the Benguet Provincial Federation of Persons with Disabilities Inc. (BPFPDI).

The story of BPFPDI is no ordinary feat. Maria Oyas, the president of the firm, said they managed to turn a modest loan offering into a self-generating and income-earning entity devoted to financial assistance.

Oyas said that when the federation first decided to put up the business, the members doubted its success since none of them had the experience of managing a business group.

"But we still chose the business since it is the most doable and adaptable to our physical limitations," she said.

Oyas, 57, is a farmer from Atok town who was born with clubfoot (congenital deformity of the foot).

Roger Balinto, a blind masseur and one of the group's founders, said they initially thought of putting up a grocery.

"But we had no building to put our stuff," he said.

Encouragement

Oyas and Balinto said the group owed much to Juanna Bannawe, the provincial social welfare and development officer, who, they said, encouraged the PWDs to try lending money instead.

The group borrowed P50,000 from the provincial government's self-employment assistance program in 1997 and the officers decided to impose an interest of 3 percent for every loan.

The business clicked, particularly among provincial capitol employees who found their loan applications easy to process and the loan terms acceptable..

It took the group seven years to repay back its loan, interest free.

Cash asset

Today, the BPFPDI, which represents Benguet's 1,679 PWDs, has a cash asset of close to P900,000.

Most of the cash are in the hands of borrowers whose interest payments would be used anew to boost the revolving capital.

"It's a small amount to some. But we are excited about it and the prospect of earning our first million pesos," said Eddie Mateo, the group's treasurer.

The group maintains a savings account with the Highland Rural Bank in La Trinidad town.

Its officers manage the business' operations. Each officer is entitled to an honorarium of P300 per meeting and an annual bonus of P1,500.

No capital asset

The group though does not have capital assets because the provincial social welfare office had offered its office as the group's business center, supplying all materials from pens and paper clips to cabinets and books of accounts.

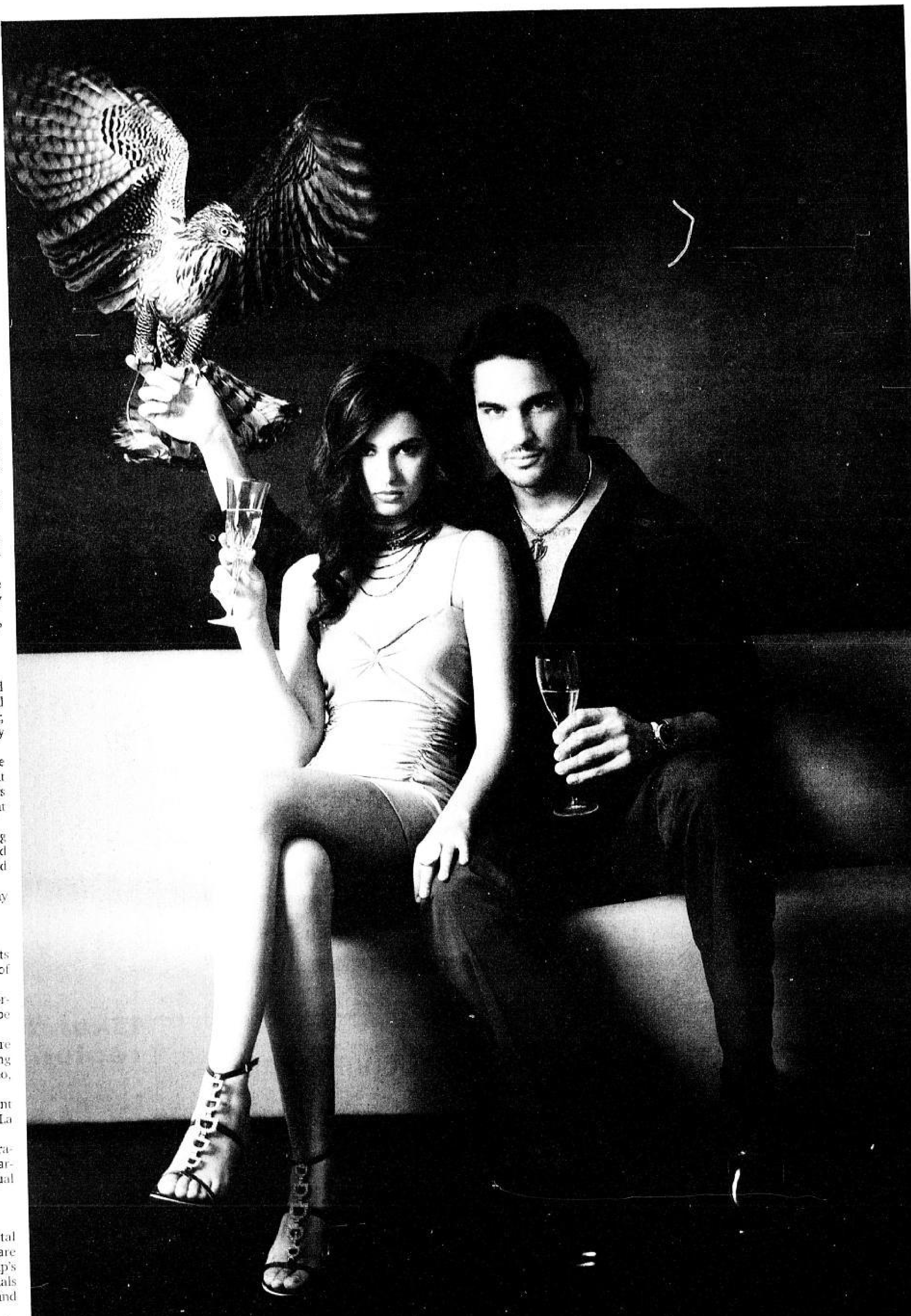
Bannawe said the lending program for PWDs is a unique project of the provincial social welfare office.

She said through the project, the PWDs proved that they too have a knack for business.

"Before, the PWDs were dependent on charity and dole outs. Now, they are the ones extending help through loans," she said.

She said Benguet's PWD lending business could be the first of its kind in the region as she had not heard of other similar endeavors.

Plans are afoot to convert the business into a cooperative, Bannawe added.



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NATIONAL DAY 2007 SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

Tourism Malaysia

The early years

The early 70s spelt the beginning of a `new era'. The old Tourism Department of 1959 was then upgraded into the Tourism Development Corporation.

The formation of the 'Tourism Development Corporation (TDC) in 1972 and placing it under the purview of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (Miti) for strategic planning and focus charted a new era in the history of the tourism industry. That was the same year Malaysia Airlines was formed (1972). It was the dawn of a new beginning and both TDC and MAS were tasked to put Malaysia on the world tourist map. Since then, the Malaysian economy remains relatively robust with manufacturing and tourism taking the lead.

Today, the tourism industry has experienced a rapid growth and gained an importance in the Malaysian economy. It is the second largest foreign exchange earner, after manufacturing. This is in line with the government's objective to accelerate the domestic private sector and stimulate the services sector to spearhead economic growth.

Tourism's contribution receipts

In the context of tourism receipts, the contribution from this sector has been very encouraging. For instance, the Malaysian economy registered RM17.40 billion in receipts from 10.22 million visitors in 2000 (just a year after implementing the three-pronged action). This constituted a 28.9 per cent increase between 1999 and 2000. With the exception of 2003 (SARS & Gulf War), this upward trend continued until today.

From the tourism receipts (tourism revenue) contribution, there exists a steady growth. For example, tourism receipts increased from RM17.40 billion in 2000 to RM24.20 billion a year later and then increased further to RM25.80 billion (2002), RM29.7 billion (2004) and RM32.00 billion in 2005. Last year Malaysia received RM36.3 billion (USD10.4 billion) in tourism receipts.

The top 10 markets in 2006 were Singapore (9,656,251 arrivals), Thailand (1,891,921 arrivals), Indonesia (1,217,024 arrivals), Brunei (784,446 arrivals), China (439,294 arrivals), Japan (354,213 arrivals), India (279,046 arrivals), Australia (277,125 arrivals), United Kingdom (252,035 arrivals) and the Philippines (211,123 arrivals).

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Malaysia's services sector is the largest sector in the economy, contributing 52.4 percent to GDP and 48.6 percent to total employment in 2000. The government views the services sector as a catalyst for growth.

Last year, the national GDP was at RM1,098.3 billion or USD 313.8 billion (constant 1987 prices) with a growth of 5.9 percent of which RM36.3 billion or USD 10.3 billion came from the tourism sector thus making it as the second economic contributor for 2006. The services sector accounts about 54 percent of the national GDP.

Jobs, employment

Out of the total national workforce, 51 percent (2005) were in the services sector. This translates into almost 5.4 million out of the 10.73 million of the national workforce being employed either directly or indirectly in the tourism sector, be it in hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, airlines, transportation etc. By providing job opportunities, the tourism sector has played a role in keeping unemployment down to a low at 3.5 percent (2005/2006).

Retail sector

With the introduction of the Mega Sale Carnival in 1999, the economy received a boost from the retail sector.

The Malaysian tourism authority has undertaken efforts to position Malaysia as a leading international shopping destination. The Mega Sales Carnivals were held on a nationwide basis were successful in attracting more shoppers. Each Mega Sale has managed to attract additional half a million foreign visitors and day-trippers from the neighbouring countries, on top of the normal tourist arrivals. The effort facilitated the growth in tourism expenditure and consumer demand, which enhanced the growth of retail trade.

For instance, in 2003, the retail sector made up just over 13 percent of Malaysia's gross domestic product (GDP) and employed about 730,000 workers, or 7 percent of the total workforce. Then in 2005, the retail sector made a 10.2 percent growth in sales over the same period in 2004.

Its relations to other sectors of the economy, such as wholesaling, advertisement and promotions, info technology and logistics, ensure it that it has a pivotal role to play.

Education tourism

The increase in the number of institutions of higher learning and twinning programmes with foreign universities provided the foundation for the growth in education tourism. Currently, over 50,000 foreign students registered with institutions of higher learning in the country. There are additional spins-offs as parents of foreign students took the opportunity to spend their holidays at tourist attractions when visiting their children.

Education tourism has become popular as reflected by the demand for tours to visit schools to enable students from other countries to gain knowledge of the school education system as well as experience the Malaysian school atmosphere, which is unique with the social interaction of the various ethnic groups besides contributing to the national economy.

Medical and health sector

Since it was introduced in 1999, the medical and health tourism has contributed handsomely to the national economy. Last year (2006), a total of 296,687 health tourists visited Malaysia yielding revenue totalling RM203.66 million (USD32.8 million).

'Malaysia My Second Home'

Malaysia My Second Home Programme is promoted by the Government of Malaysia to allow people from all over the world who fulfill certain criteria, to stay in Malaysia as long as possible on a social visit pass with a multiple entry visa.

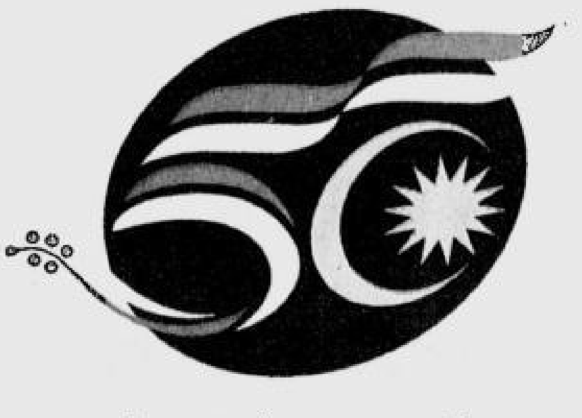
The Social Visit Pass is initially for a period of ten (10) years (depending on the validity of the applicants' passport) and is renewable. The programme has managed to attract more than 10,000 foreigners since it was introduced in 1996 to date. Last year alone there were 1,728 people registered under the programme, which has various flexible conditions, and was introduced to enable foreigners with a high income to stay in the country for at least five years or for a longer period of time.

> 'The Malaysian tourism authority has undertaken efforts to position Malaysia as a leading international shopping destination. The Mega Sales Carnivals were held on a nationwide basis were successful in attracting more shoppers'

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, ARTS
AND HERITAGE MALAYSIA
(KEKKWA)

Launching Of The Logo
Of The 50th Anniversary of Merdeka, 2007

Officiated by,
YB Datuk Seri Dr. Rais Yatim, The Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage Malaysia
On 5th March 2007, 15 Safar 1428, at the Auditorium Jabatan Perdana Menteri, Putrajaya.



Malaysiaku Gemilang

Logo Rationale

Visit Malaysia Year 2007

THIS YEAR, MALAYSIA'S FOCUS WILL be on the Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) 2007, and is aimed at aggressively promoting Malaysia, increasing tourist arrivals, as well as encouraging domestic tourism among Malaysians.

Coincidentally, 2007 is also the year of Malaysia's 50th independence. As such, the Visit Malaysia Year campaign is a timely event to celebrate Malaysia's golden jubilee. It is an occasion to rejoice and to share with the world the unique qualities and virtues that have shaped Malaysia to be the country that it is today.

The VMY 2007 campaign is expected to raise the awareness of foreign tourists to enable them to plan their holidays in Malaysia. For VMY 2007, the country has set a target to attract 20.1 million tourists.

Overall, there are over 240 events, of which, 50 being major events and 5 as international mega events. All these events are presented in `One Golden Celebration'. A celebration that brings Malaysia to the world, and the world to Malaysia.

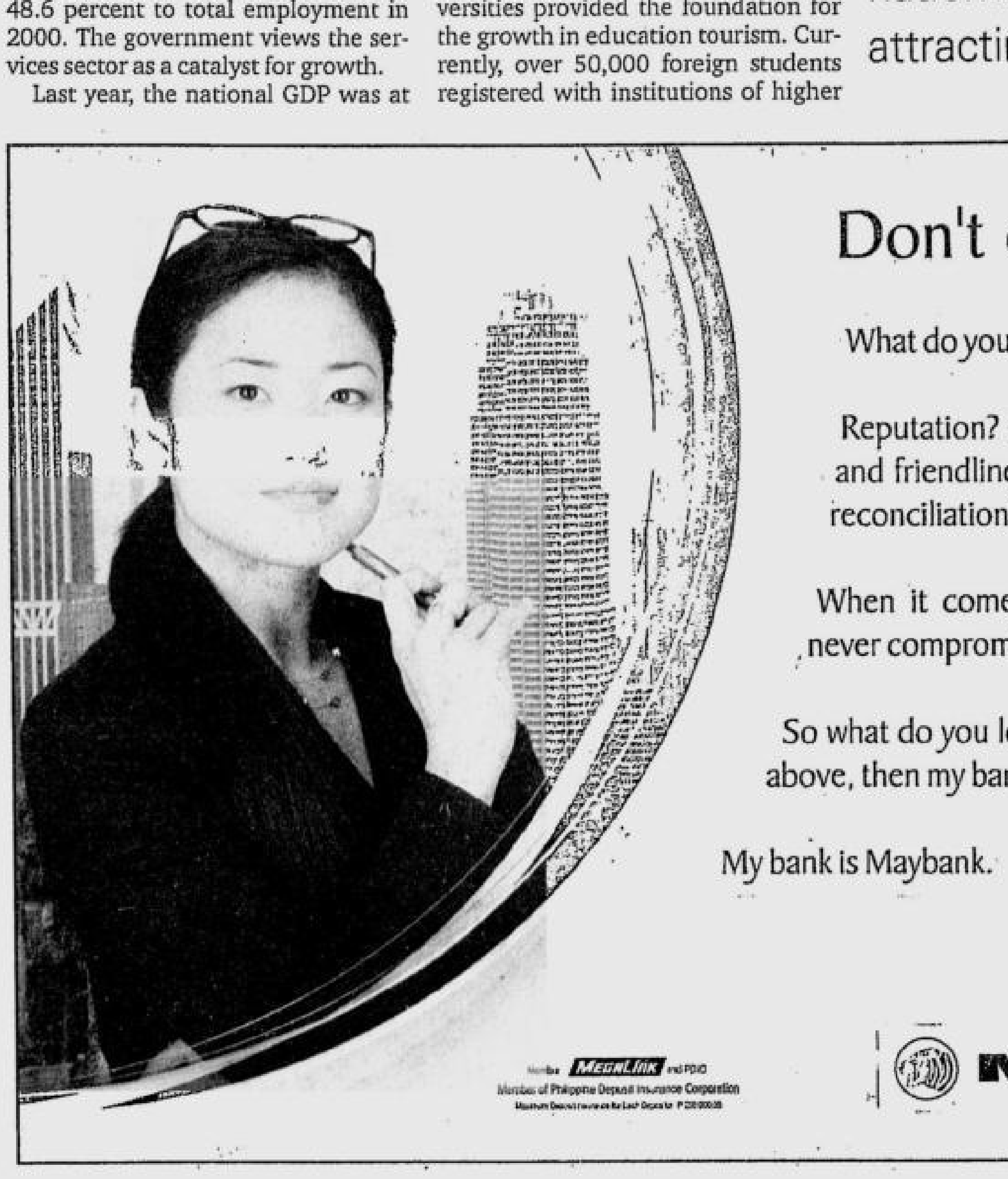
The first event of the year was the Visit Malaysia Year Grand Launch on 6 January by the Honourable Prime Minister of Malaysia in the presence of 500 international media and trade representatives from all over the world. Highlight of the Grand Launch was the unveiling of the Eye on Malaysia, which is a 60-metre Ferris Wheel followed by the Flora Fest Parade, a spectacular display of floats dressed in all kinds of flowers found in Malaysia.

The other mega events include the Malaysian International Aerospace Adventure, the International Fireworks Display, the Malaysian International Tattoo and the KL International Buskers Festival.

Conclusion:

The tourism industry has come along way since its inception in 1959 with only a Tourism Department back then. Today, after 50 years and half of a century later, the industry has moved with such celerity to become the second income spinner to the national economy whilst experiencing tremendous growth from year to year. The string of awards and accolades awarded to Malaysia bears testimony to this fact.

- Malaysia was voted as one of the top five most popular outbound destinations in 2006 out of 100 countries in a poll organized by Guangzhou Daily, the biggest South China newspaper which has a daily circulation of 1.8 million.
- Malaysia received two awards at the tourism film competition Das goldene Stadttor (The Golden City Gate) during the world's largest tourism exhibition, ITB, in March 2007. The tropical nature paradise won the gold award for the "Malaysia Now" global online campaign and a silver award for its 60-second TV commercial themed "The Time is Now, The Place is Malaysia."
- Malaysia was also named the "Best Tourism Destination 2006" by the American business travel magazine Global Traveller in the beginning of the year.
- In early May 2007, Malaysia was awarded as the `Best Summer Destination' for United Arab Emirates residents by Asfaar Magazine.



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Iskandar development region of Malaysia

THE ISKANDAR DEVELOPMENT Region (IDR) which was officially launched by His Royal Highness the Sultan of Johor on the 4 November, 2006 is set to become Southern Peninsular Malaysia's most developed region, where living, entertainment, environment and business seamlessly converge within a bustling and vibrant metropolis.

Located in Johor, the southern gateway to Peninsular Malaysia, IDR is only six to eight hours flight radius from Asia's burgeoning growth centers such as Bangalore, Dubai, Hong Kong Seoul, Shanghai, Taipei and Tokyo. It is also within reach of a global market of some 800 million people.

South Johor is accessible by four ways; air, land, rail and sea. The available Senai International Airport provides easy access by air travel. By road, Kuala Lumpur is just a three-hour drive while Singapore's Changi International Airport is just a 55 minutes drive. Rail travel is also available. IDR is flanked by three major ports, the Pasir Gudang Port, Port of Tanjung Pelepas and Tanjung Langsat Port.

IDR aims to be a sustainable region of international standard. The beacon of new growth, IDR will spur economic developments that actuate Malaysia's global potential. Recognizing the need for sustainable development, social and environmental issues features heavily on its agenda. IDR's commitments to these causes are evident in its manifestation within the IDR Masterplan.

IDR is the ideal place to do business within the Johor-Singapore-Indonesia (JSI) Triangle. It offers state-of-the-art physical infrastructure and a world-class business environment like excellent logistical facilities, cyber cities, and central business administration.

South Johor as a whole complements Singapore's growth strategy with an environment that provides an alternative "quality of life" that is not readily available in the Island State.

Recognizing South Johor's strategic importance to national development, the Federal Government supports the State in respect of planning, implementation, coordination, control, management, finance and promotion to ensure the success of the Iskandar Development Region.

On this memorable and auspicious occasion of Malaysia's 50th anniversary, it is my great honour to extend my warmest greetings to our Filipino friends and fellow Malaysian nationals in the Republic of the Philippines.

Since the country achieved its independence in 1957, we have successfully faced various challenges and continue to move forward and remain stable and strong as a nation and we are thankful for the blessings we have received so far. Malaysia has achieved many milestones to be proud of in terms of national and regional development, international relations, economic growth and social progress. Our economic growth for example has been impressive with an average of more than six percent over the recent years. Indeed our nation is gearing up to achieve Vision 2020 which will transform Malaysia into a developed, holistic, progressive and modern country yet rooted in values, cultures and traditions in what are uniquely Malaysian.

Malaysia has a growing international education sector and fast becoming a centre of educational excellence in the region. Malaysia currently houses more than 50,000 international students from more than 100 countries. Many of them choose to study in Malaysia because they recognize the quality international education at affordable cost which is offered in Malaysia. Besides that, it is an ideal gateway to develop their Asian network and relationship as well as to learn from Malaysia's great diversity, rapid economic development and people living in peace and harmony. The Government is also committed in strengthening Malaysia's position as an international Islamic financial centre by creating a more vibrant, innovative and competitive international Islamic financial services industry in Malaysia. Indeed, the Islamic finance in Malaysia has undergone significant transformation over the last two decades. It has successfully integrated key structural components comprising Islamic banking industry, the "Takaful" industry (Islamic insurance), and the Islamic money and capital markets.

As neighbors and Asean brothers, Malaysia and the Republic of the Philippines have long shared close cooperation at various level stemmed from mutual respect and our similar historical connection. Through the year 2007, the diplomatic relations between Malaysia and the Republic of the Philippines have continued to grow from strength to strength. One of the core activities which catalyst this strong collaboration is the Joint Commission Meeting (JCMs). It provides an opportunity for Malaysia and the Republic of the Philippines to discuss and resolve issue of common interest and concern such as trade, investment, transportation, education, human resource development, information, consular and security matters. On the trade and investment front, Malaysia is the 7th largest trading partner of the Philippines with total trade approximated at more than USD 4 Billion.

As a nation ingrained with the principle "prosper thy neighbour", Malaysia is committed in assisting other fellow developing countries in capacity building through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP). Since its inception in 1982 until to-date, the MTCP had trained and offered scholarships to approximately 720 Filipinos in various technical areas such as information technology, biotechnology, economic planning, cooperatives and public administration. Recently on 3 May 2007, the MTCP Alumni members have established the MTCP Scholars of the Philippines Incorporated (MTCP-Sapi), with the objective to share, apply and disseminate their knowledge and expertise learnt through their MTCP training.

Malaysia remains committed to its involvement in the Southern Philippines as the mediator in the peace process. As a show of its commitment, the Government of Malaysia has deployed its first team of International Monitoring Team (IMT) in October 2004 to monitor the ceasefire between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

As founding member countries of Asean, both Malaysia and the Republic of the Philippines have played significant roles in facilitating the success of the regional body as we know it now. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Republic of the Philippines for its successful chairmanship of the 12th Asean Summit and the 40th Asean Ministerial Meeting/ Post Ministerial Conference/ Asean Regional Forum. Indeed, the theme "One Caring and Sharing Community" aptly articulates the Asean Vision 2020 which aims to create "...a concert of Southeast Asian nations, outward looking, living in peace, stability and prosperity, bonded together in partnership, in dynamic development and in a community of caring societies...".

Last but not least, I wish to express my utmost confidence that the strong relations between Malaysia and the Republic of the Philippines will continue to prosper and bring mutual benefits to both countries in the years ahead.

Terima kasih.

Thank you and Mabuhay.

H.E AMBASSADOR AHMAD RASIDI HAZIZI
Ambassador Of Malaysia To The Republic Of The Philippines

MTD Malaysian Expressway, the showcase model for SLEX

The safety model for the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX), which is now under rehabilitation, is the Kuala Lumpur to Karak to Kuantan expressway in Malaysia that was built by MTD Capital Bhd.

It is an Asian infrastructure showcase, 229 kilometers long and almost the same distance as Makati to Baguio, but it takes only one fourth of the time to travel. From the previous 6 hours, people and goods can now make it in only 3 hours.

From KL on the western side of the peninsula, it climbs upland, winding around and through mountains, spanning deep gorges and ending at the South China Sea coast in the East. In aerial shots it looks like a long, silk ribbon on green velvet, and rides just as smooth.

It has 2 toll plazas, 3 viaducts, 3 rest and service areas with passenger lounges, a ventilated, gallery-like tunnel blasted through a solid granite mountain, snack-and-go stops called "lay-bys", round-the-clock highway patrol, SOS telephones installed every 2 kilometers along both sides of the highway, and a control center that monitors every inch of the expressway and takes the calls, direct, 24-hours a day.

While motorists are impressed with the amenities, MTD is more concerned with highway safety.

The upland expressway, which looks and feels like a temperate forest park, actually hides many safety devices. Long stretches of the road had been cut from slopes so steep landslides would have occurred with the first season of equatorial rains if not for several erosion control measures. Steep slopes are terraced or earth walled, and where needed, the soil had been "nailed" to the mountainside, then held down with carefully selected grass and hedges.

And almost invisible to road users are narrow flights of steps climbing inconspicuously up the side of the terraced slopes. These steps allow the maintenance engineers to look for signs of loosened soil, and breaks the flow of rainwater so it can pour harmlessly on the roadway below.

Did MTD purposely build-in the highway curves to keep drivers alert? The mountains provided the curves but MTD engineers would have done so had the terrain been different. At night, startlingly simple anti-glare devices protect the driver from blinding headlights, and tiger eye studs and blinking chevrons pilot him down his lane as would an airstrip.

'Value engineering' gives SLEX appropriate technology for road safety

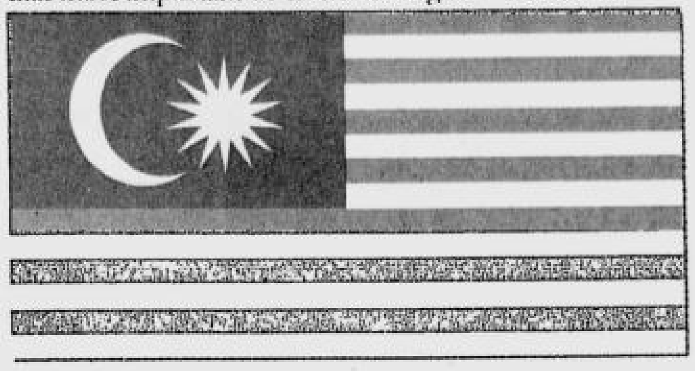
Provisions for motorists' safety on SLEX will run from the advanced engineering technology currently being applied on the rehabilitation of the Alabang Viaduct to simpler ones used in the flat sections of the roadway.

MTD calls it "value engineering". This means using necessary technology in all aspects of design and construction, and not one frivolous flourish more. MTD does not over-design or over-build. And they make the most use of existing resources. As an example, MTD rerouted the KL to Kuantan highway through nearby granite mountains so that crushed stone needed for construction may easily be sourced at no extra cost.

The SLTC management says this is how they can keep the cost of the rehabilitation and upgrading at realistic levels, since it intends to keep toll the South Luzon Tollway portion of SLEX- from Alabang to Calamba - the most affordable even after project completion.

The SLEX rehabilitation and upgrading project will widen the Alabang Viaduct from 6 to 8 lanes; the section from Filinvest to Sta. Rosa, from 4 to 8 lanes, and the section from Sta. Rosa to Calamba, from 4 to 6 lanes. From Calamba, SLEX will extend to Sto. Tomas, Batangas and link up with STAR Tollways.

One minute after midnight on August 31, 1957, the Malayan Flag was raised as the Union Jack was lowered, signifying Malaysia's independence from Britain, amidst ringing cries of "Merdeka! Merdeka! Merdeka!", the Malay word for that most important of all human rights -- freedom.



The South Luzon Tollway Corporation
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MERDEKA

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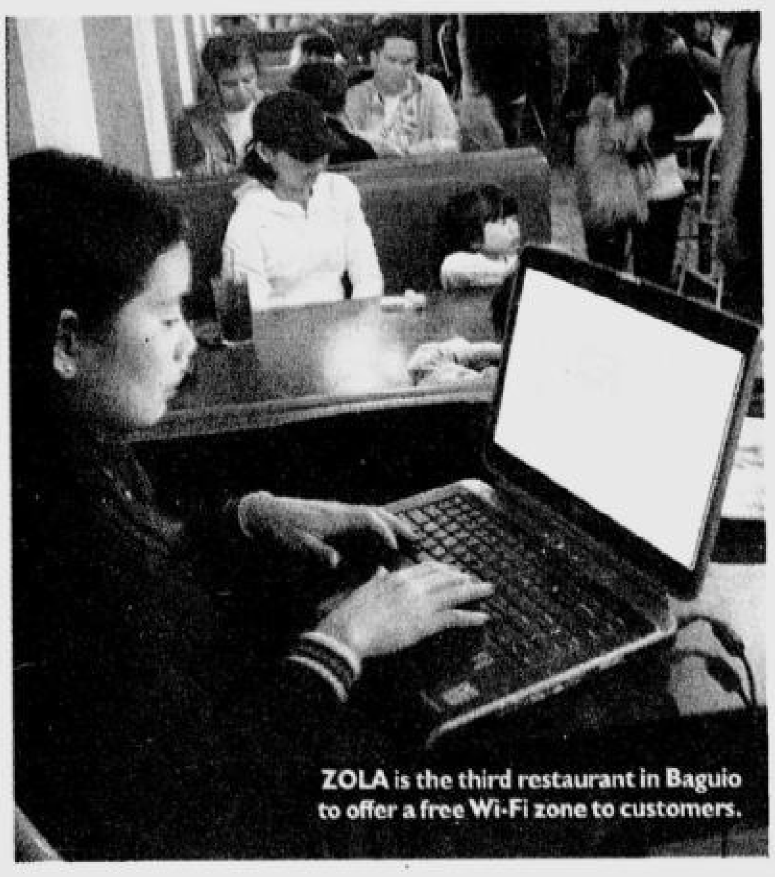


ZOLA is the third restaurant in Baguio to offer a free Wi-Fi zone to customers.

ZOLA RESTO CAFE
FREE WiFi ZONE

RESTAURANTS, like Zola, decided to mix the Web with food. PHOTOS BY EV ESPIRITU

By Frank Cimatu
Inquirer Notrhern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—UPPER SESSION ROAD IS, unofficially, Baguio's pizza district. It started with the defunct Rainbow Kitchen's pan pizza and the original Shakey's at the former Skyworld building.

There are three local pizzerias (Pizza Volante, Visco's and Don Henrico's) and two franchise outlets (Pizza Hut and one of Greenwich's oldest branches) when Zola came along at the start of the year.

Like Pizza Volante, Zola operates 24 hours to cater to the burgeoning call center clients.

But unlike the other pizzerias, Zola (an acronym for Zest of Life's Abundance) is offering free Wi-Fi wireless Internet access.

"It was my idea at the start. It wasn't much of an expense to come out with free Wi-Fi," said owner Mark Sy.

"I have Wi-Fi access in my office so why not share it with the customers for free?" he said.

There are establishments in the city that allow one to access the Internet through an Internet card that they are selling.

Sy said those lugging their laptops and mobile phones to use their free Wi-Fi access account for about 5 to 20 percent of the clients.

"They fill up the dull hours," said Sy, referring to hours after breakfast and lunch.

Chato Sacayanan, assistant manager of Zola, said their clients are mostly yuppies (young urban professionals) and college students and the Wi-Fi access is a big factor for this set of customers.

"At first, we asked them to spend a minimum [amount] on food and drinks but we became lenient with our frequent clients," Sacayanan said.

Sy said catering to tourists only would be unprofitable for Baguio because tourism is seasonal.

He said the "real" tourist season starts from February to May.

Coffee shops, restaurants and pizzerias here need to fill up the dull months and the free Wi-Fi access is one good business gimmick.

Web logs (blogs) have been featuring places with free Wi-Fi access since 2006 and the list is not as long as expected.

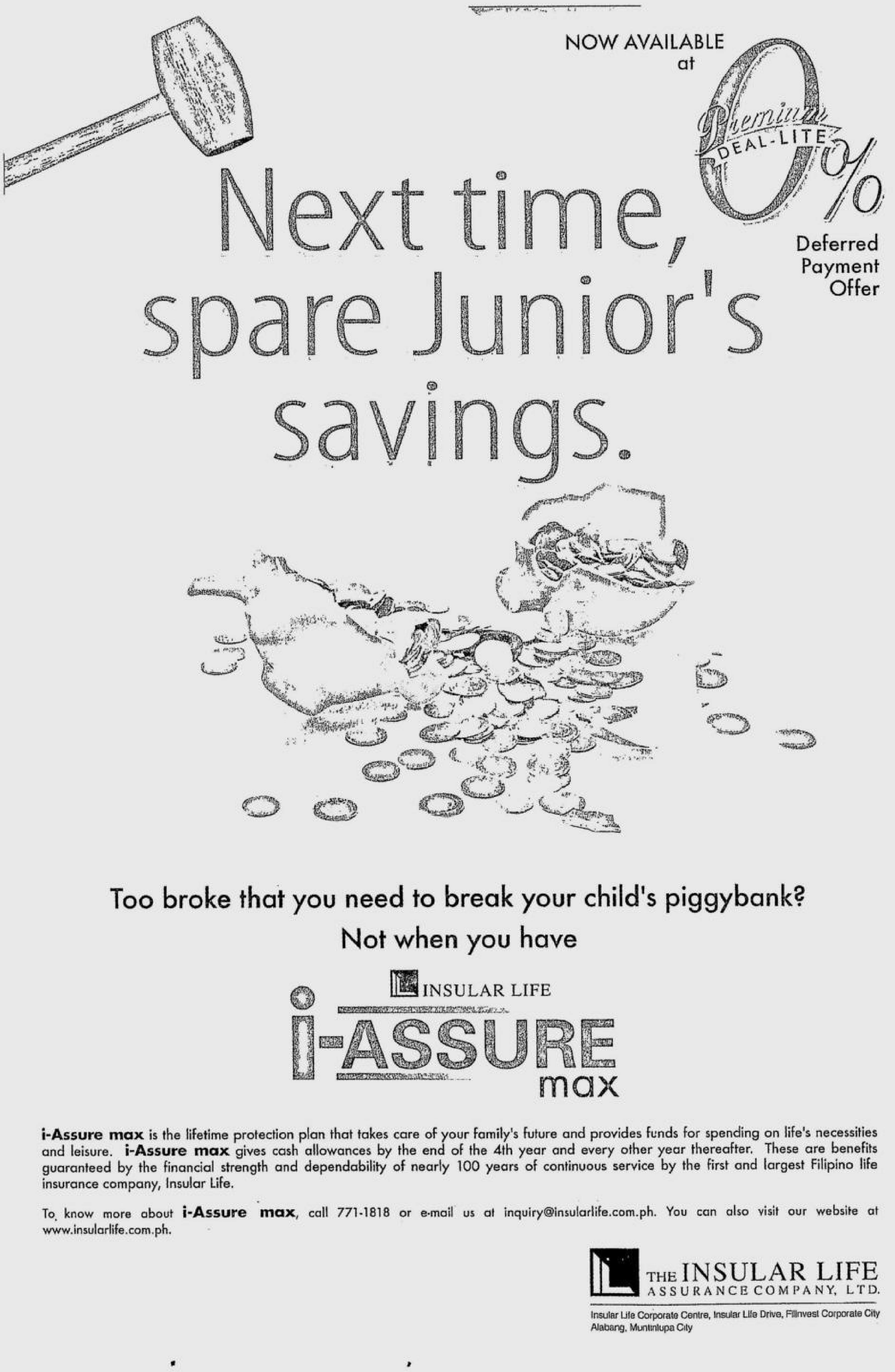
In Metro Manila, about 40 public areas, mostly coffee shops and restaurants, offer free Wi-Fi access. Outside Metro Manila, there are unofficially only about 50.

The most "free wired" is Davao City with 21 areas having free Wi-Fi access.

In Baguio, about six areas have free Wi-Fi, among them Halfmoon Café at the Mines View Park, Forest House and Nagomi Spa.

While most of its clients are students and yuppies, Zola gained a little notoriety when members of an Internet-based investment scheme frequented the restaurant because of the free Wi-Fi to lure clients into plunking $1,000, Sacayanan said.

Other than the Wi-Fi access, Sy said Zola's other major attractions are their choices of pizza and pasta, with pizza montagnola and tosca, and pasta tomato meat ragout and carbonara as favorites.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Insular Life breaks new ground with the Zero% Deferred Payment Offer

Insular Life, the country's first and largest Filipino life insurance company continues to provide relevant solutions that meet the ever-changing needs of its target market, when it recently launched a new payment option, the Premium Deal-lite: Zero% Deferred Payment Offer.

Starting August 1, Insular Life offers its policyholders a convenient payment option to make it easier to avail themselves of financial protection.

A first in the insurance industry, Insular Life's Premium Deal-lite: Zero% Deferred Payment Offer enables policyholders to pay their premiums in three (3) easy monthly installments at zero% interest! Under this scheme, initial and renewal premiums with a minimum transaction of P3,000 paid on or before the policy's due date can be spread in three months without interest.

The participating credit cards for this offer include: HSBC (Visa, MasterCard), Equitable Card Network (Visa, Mastercard, JCB and American Express), Bankard, (Visa, MasterCard and JCB) and BPI (BPI Express Credit, Visa, MasterCard).

For questions on the Premium Deal-lite: Zero% Deferred Payment Offer, please call Insular Life's Customer Value Management Department at (02) 771 1818 locals 1318 to 1320.

E-mail: aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Aries Espinosa

OFF-ROAD TALK

Learning the wild ride

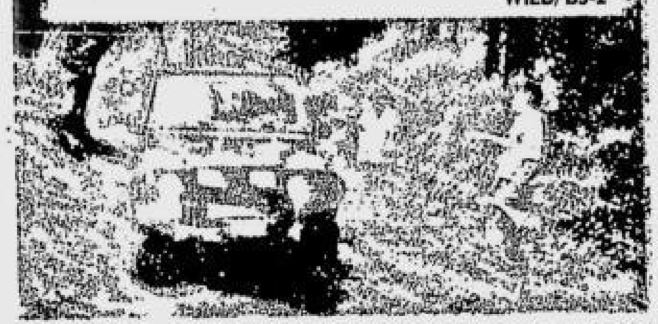
Landcraft/RFC Team Philippines holds 4x4 Clinic

By Beeboy Bargas

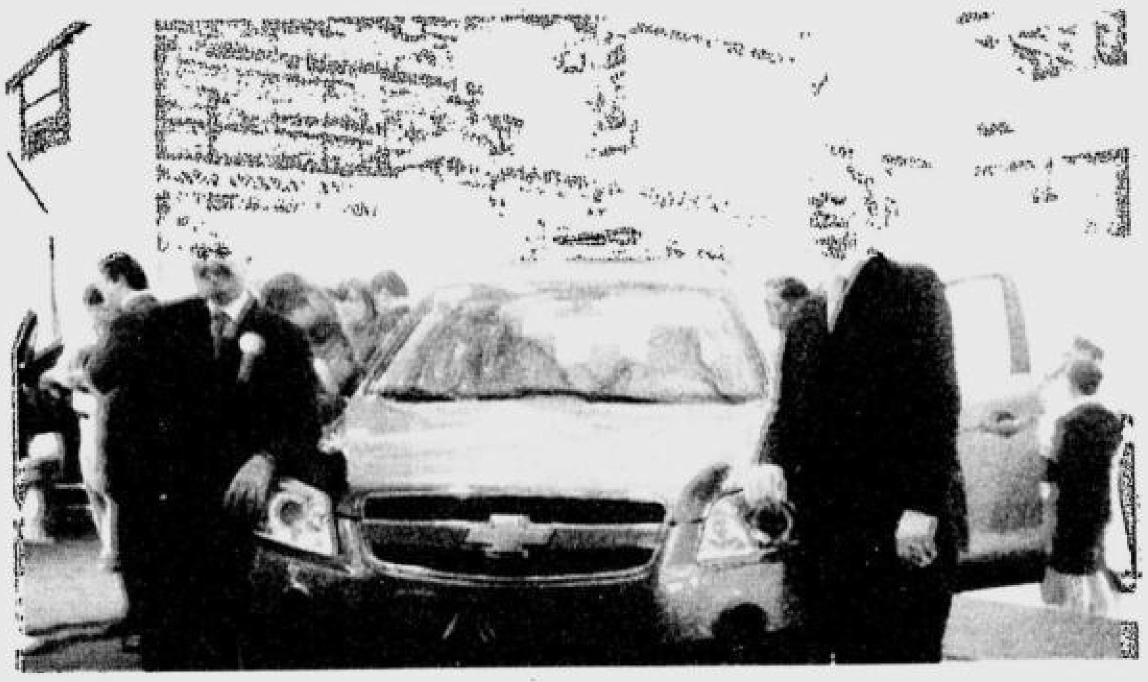
OFF-ROAD DRIVING HAS ITS OWN SET OF rules, and most of the basic principles for safe, environmentally correct off-road driving runs contrary to regular road driving. Landcraft 4x4 Center, in cooperation with Rainforest Challenge Team Philippines, recently organized a basic off-road driving clinic for the ever-increasing number of enthusiasts of the sport. More than 50 participants driving varying makes of 4x4 vehicles gathered at the Landcraft 4x4 Center in Barangay Daraitan, Tanay, Rizal.

Now why on earth would normally level headed individuals like doctors, lawyers, and other professionals and businessmen subject their expensive vehicles to such abuse as crawling over rocks bigger than basketballs, immers-

WILD/ B3-2

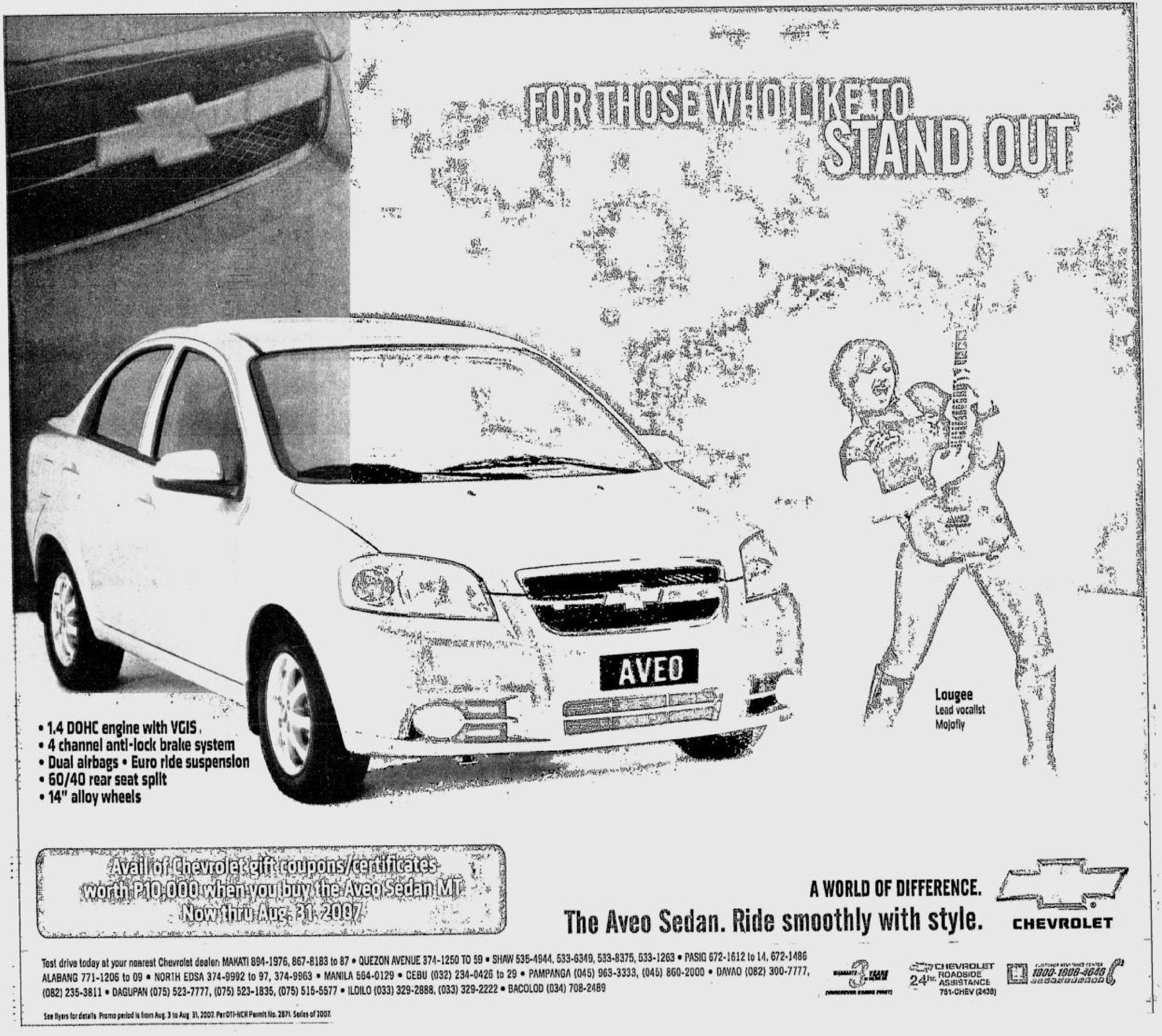


PHOTOS BY JAM ARELLANO OF 4X4PH.COM



NEW CH[illegible] LAUNCHED

Francis Burdett, president of General Motors (GM) Philippines together with Steve Carlisle, president of GM Southeast Asia Operations and president of GM Thailand presents the new Chevrolet Captiva, Chevrolet's first entry in the local market's compact SUV category during the opening of the First Philippine International Motor Show (Aug. 9) at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. Carlisle said the Chevrolet Captiva, which is set to roll off next month is being launched by GM globally. The Captiva began its journey as a concept conceived by GM designers and engineers from all corners of the globe. In a collaborative effort that involved 11 GM design centers around the world, the Captiva was tested exhaustively over 5 million kilometers in every terrain imaginable in order to ensure that the vehicle would live up to the same high standards that GM expects of every one of its products. Burdett said, 'The Chevrolet Captiva will not only exceed expectations of local consumers and is GM Philippines' entry in the highly competitive compact SUV segment. New models mean more choices for the Filipino market.'



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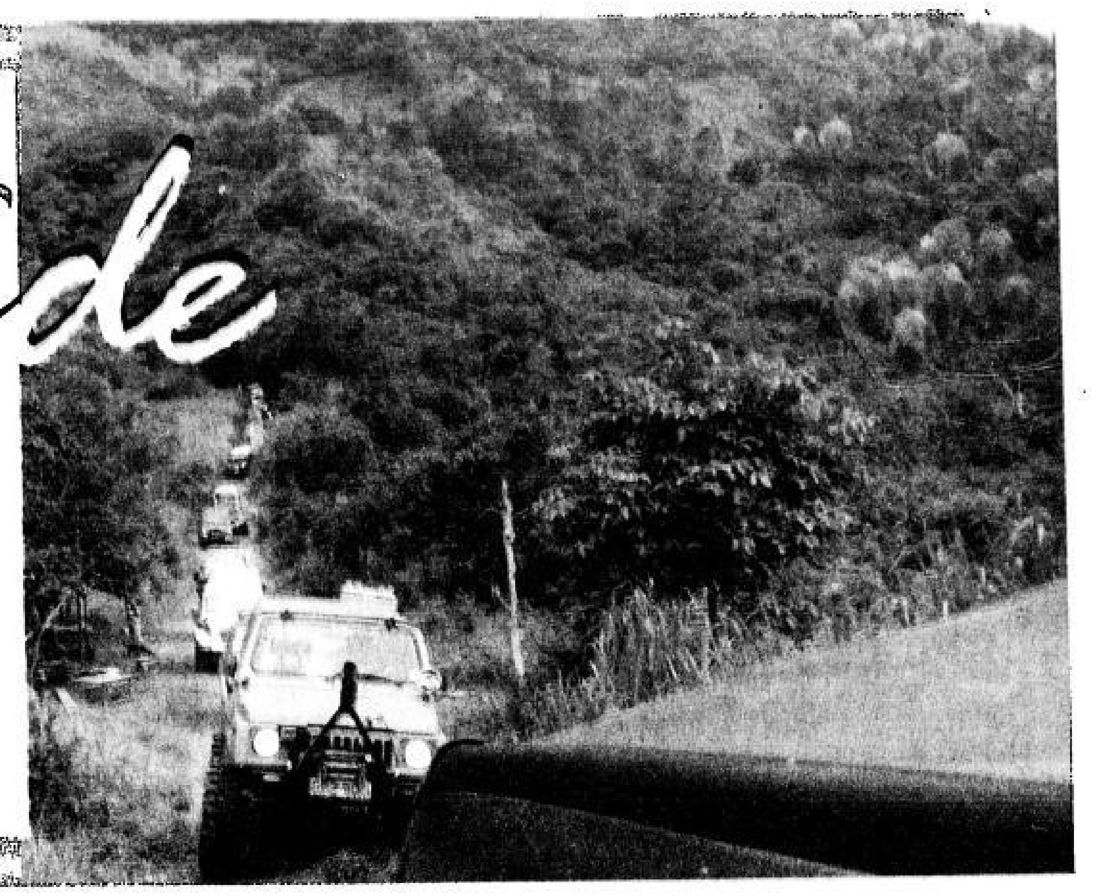
Learning the wild ride



From page B3-1

ing them in chest-deep rivers, clawing and clambering for traction on steep and slippery surfaces bordered by ravines? Because people by nature are adventurous, and the urge to explore what is outside their normal routine calls them out. It's the very reason they bought these vehicles. And what better way to preserve their investment than a proper driving clinic.

The primary concern in off-road driving is traction, so a demonstration and discussion was held while various Land Rover and Land Cruiser vehicles attempted to negotiate a 100-meter, 40-degree red clay mud slope in its most slippery condition. Proper vehicle preparation and tire and performance combinations also demonstrated what worked and what didn't, what was safe to do and what was not. Some participants were even generous enough to let their vehicles be used as demonstration platforms for some of the exercises. There was much enthusiasm among all participants.

Seeing and hearing is one thing, experiencing it is another. Right after lunch at the next venue, participants got a chance to do hands on exercises supervised by instructors on what they had learned in the morning activities. Instructors at Team RFC Philippines, led by Philippine representative Robby Consunji, Larry Mendiola, Atoy Jamila and Dennis Javier, were not disappointed with the enthusiasm participants showed.

As a bonus, participants were accorded a first peek at the 2007 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited in Rubicon specs, provided by CATS Inc's PR boss Androz Villaraza and sales head Robert Shaw, The most off-road, go-anywhere vehicle straight out of a dealership, the 4-door 2007 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited will be available soon in the local market. It features front and rear locking differentials for better traction and automatic disconnecting stabilizer bars for improved axle articulation and a smoother ride off road. For the fun part it also comes with a 3-piece easy-to-remove roof for open-air motoring.

After navigating the training track, participants were subjected to a blindfolded drive through a simple sand obstacle course. The objective of the exercise was to fine tune communications between driver and co-driver, which is critical when negotiating difficult terrain as the co-driver acts as trail spotter when he leaves the vehicle and guides the driver and the vehicle through terrain which the driver cannot see from his seat. Participants used Jeep's flagship vehicle the Commander for the exercise and were not disappointed with the vehicle's performance, albeit blindfolded and all.

After a full day training in both hands on and discussions, the instructors debriefed the participants on what they learned and prepared them for what to expect in the next clinic to be held in September.

Participants had admitted that most of them would never have subjected their vehicles on such off road conditions on their own without the proper guidance and instructions at the clinic. They even went to say they were never even told how to use their 4x4 systems by the dealers they bought their vehicles from. The time has come to put to proper use these 4x4 vehicles through programs such as this.

For details of future activities, e-mail wolfpackinc@landcraft4x4.com.

Petron is official presentor of the 2007 Car of the Year

CAR AWARDS Group Inc (Cagi) president Ira Panganiban (right), with Petron marketing services general manager Joselito de Jesus (left) and Petron advertising and promotions manager Charmaine Canillas (center) at the manufacturing-media launch of the 2007 Petron Car of the Year-Philippines.

PETRON CORP, THE country's leading oil firm, has signed up with the Car Awards Group Inc (Cagi), to be the official presentor of the 2007 Car of the Year (Coty)-Philippines awards.

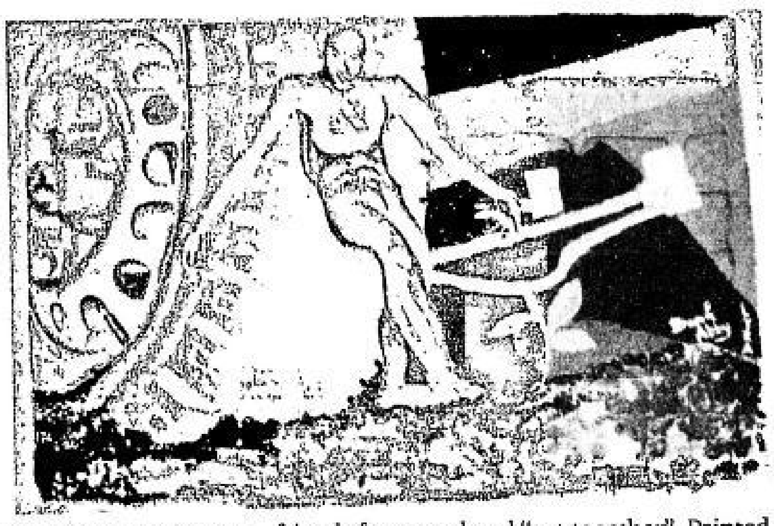
At the manufacturer-media launch held at The Loft in Manansala, Rockwell Center, last Aug 2, Cagi president Ira Panganiban announced the partnership, noting: "This year is a benchmark year for the Car of the Year-Philippines and the partnership with Petron is envisioned to spur the awards' success and raise it to a higher level."

Joselito de Jesus, Petron marketing services general manager, gave this statement about the oil company's support: "The next couple of months will find our motoring friends deep in research, road tests, calculations and a lot of debate as they choose, based on technical analysis and numeric evaluation, this year's winners. The responsibility is tremendous and the impact is even greater as the results are intended to guide the motorist in his next vehicle purchase. I am sure that the car manufacturers are very eager to put their products to the test, just as we at Petron are eager to have our petroleum products put to the test in real Philippine driving conditions. We share with Cagi and other award-giving bodies the same objective of empowering the consumer by providing him with choices that offer the best value for money."

Following a street party to publicly launch the 2007 Petron Car of the Year-Philippines proceedings, test fests will be held on 9 consecutive weekends starting Aug. 25 at the San Lazaro Hippodrome of the Manila Jockey Club in Carmona, Cavite.

A total of 106 vehicles will be tested by Cagi to nominate winners for 22 categories and this year's Car of the Year-Philippines. The Awards Night will be held on Nov. 15 at the Rockwell Tent in Rockwell Center, Makati City.

Mitsubishi Motors holds 1st murals painting for environment



MITSUBISHI Motors Philippines reiterates its commitment to environmental protection when it held its first wall painting project along the perimeter walls of its assembly plant in Cainta, Rizal Aug. 5.

Dubbed as the "2007 Mitsubishi Murals Painting for a Colorful Environment", the objective was to create a mindset of environmental awareness among employees and to provide a venue for public information towards environmental protection. Almost 70 volunteers comprising professionals and neophytes in the world of art painting, trooped to the venue as early as 5:30 a.m., tagging along family members and friends for a weekend "get together". Painted on a 2-meter by 2-meter block, each team created its own art concepts based on the theme "Protecting the Ecology System".

Shown is one of the top three murals, "Man & Machine for the Environment" by Erwin and Abby Zabalza.

Safety equipment

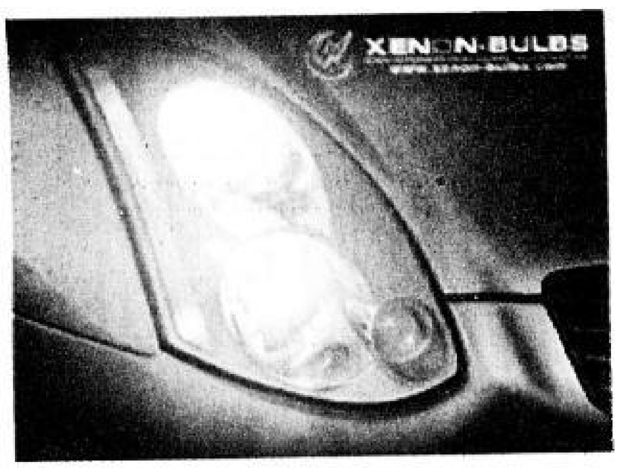
NOW THAT THE RAINY SEASON IS upon us, more people are starting to realize the importance of having better visibility, especially during nighttime, wet season driving. Hummer Philippines Inc, the exclusive distributors and innovators of aftermarket lighting systems offers the right solution, Xenon-bulb headlights which give a 'bluish-whiter' beam of powerful light. Located along 20 G. Araneta Avenue in Quezon City, Hummer Philippines Inc (HPI) is the exclusive distributor of high intensity discharge (HID) lighting kits for automobiles and smart electric bikes.

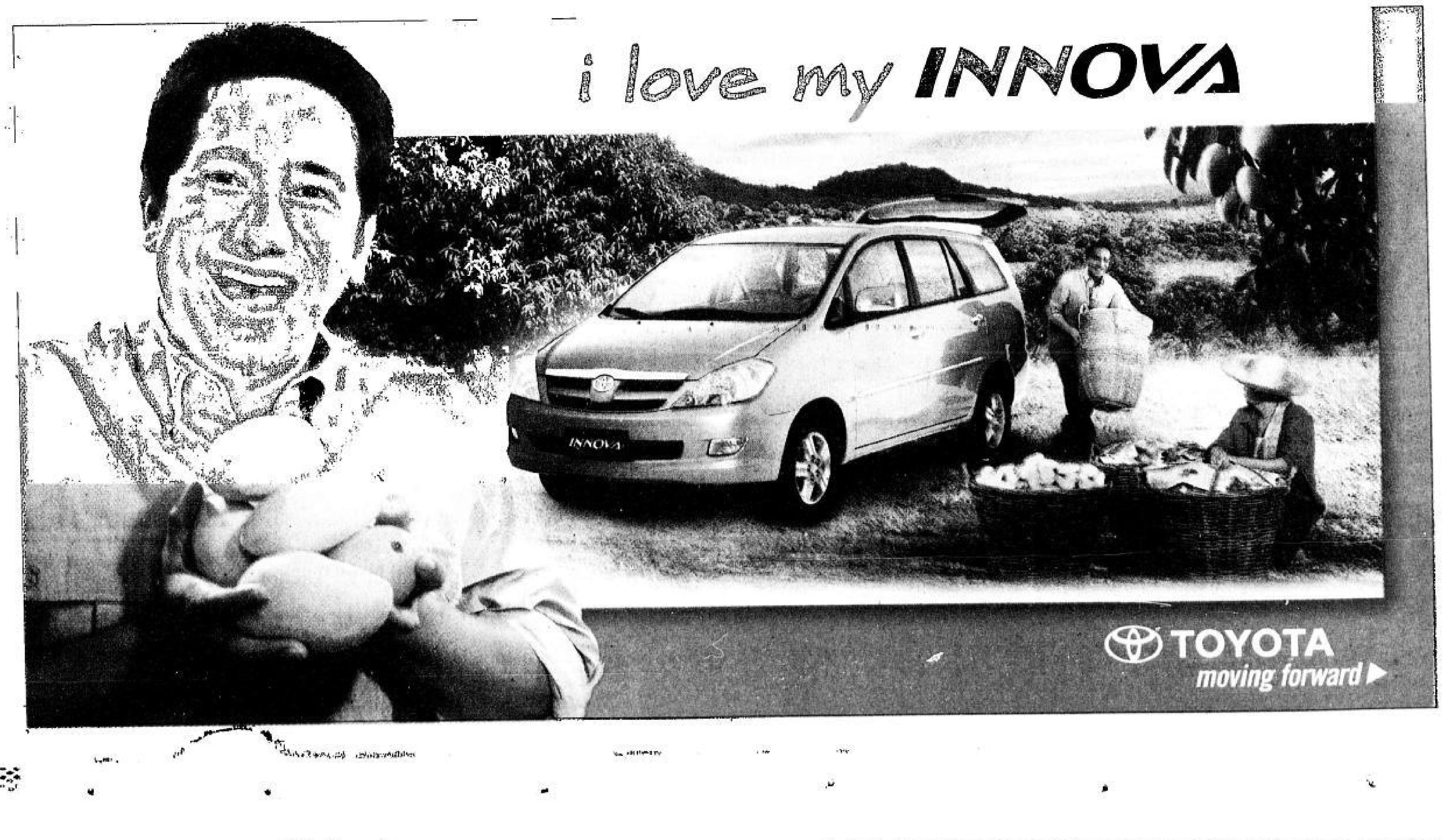
HID lamps provide more light than that produced by halogen lamps, but utilizes only two-thirds the electrical power. As a result, they are more efficient-and because there is no filament to burn out, these bulbs are claimed to last for as much as 161,000 km of driving time.

"HID light sources (bulbs) typically have about two to three times the available light flux (volume) of halogen light sources-but because of such an abundance of light, the HID optical design doesn't necessarily need to be as efficient at collecting and distributing light as a halogen system. The HID beam pattern is certainly more robust, providing more even and wider illumination and the potential for better visibility and comfort. This performance results in more light on the road surface and more of the roadway being illuminated," said Xenon Bulbs Philippines general manager Benedict Go.

With the number of imitation brands flooding the market, better be sure to purchase your original Xenon-Bulbs kit at the Xenon-Bulbs showroom at G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. "We are the only company who offers a two-year warranty on our products," adds Go.

To know more about how to increase the level of safety during night driving, call 714-6500, 713-1998, 781-6688 or 731-4433 for more details, or go to the Xenon Bulbs showroom or log on to www.xenon-bulbs.com.





Remarks

MR. STEPHEN CARLISLE

President for GM Southeast Asia Operations
General Motors Automobiles Philippines
Philippine International Motor Show
Thursday, August 9, 2007

MABUHAY AND GOOD AFTERNOON LADIES AND gentlemen.

It's a great pleasure to see you all here at the first Philippines International Motor Show.

Today, GM Philippines and Chevrolet is proud to showcase our various line-up of vehicles that deliver outstanding value through their unique combination of modern styling, class-leading levels of comfort, safety, quality, reliability and performance.

Without a doubt the Chevrolet brand is growing in the region. My predecessor, Bill Botwick, deserves much of the credit for putting Chevrolet on the map in the Philippines and the Southeast Asia. He not only launched the brand but built a strong foundation which is today contributing to our continued growth even during the difficult times.

Asean is a rapidly growing market, currently the 4th largest market in Asia Pacific after China, India, and Japan. The industry outlook for this region this year increased 0.4 percent to 1.7 million vehicles. The Philippines, with a growth of 17 percent year-to-date through June versus same period 2006, is a strong market for compact SUVs.

To compete in this market, today, let me introduce to you the new Chevrolet Captiva, which is being launched by GM globally. The Captiva began its journey as a concept conceived by GM designers and engineers from all corners of the globe. In a collaborative effort that involved 11 GM design centers around the world and 450 prototype vehicles, the Captiva was tested exhaustively over 5 million km in every terrain imaginable in order to ensure that the vehicle would live up to the same high standards that GM expects of every one of its products.

As the first truly global vehicle developed by GM, it was important that we got this right the first time. That's why we took the time to ensure that every detail met the highest standard we require of every vehicle we produce. I'm confident that the Captiva will not only exceed the expectation of Filipino customers, but also the expectations of customers in over 100 markets to where GM Thailand-manufactured products are exported to. The Chevrolet Captiva is GM Philippines' entry in the highly competitive compact SUV segment. And new models mean more choices, which can only be good for the Filipino consumers.

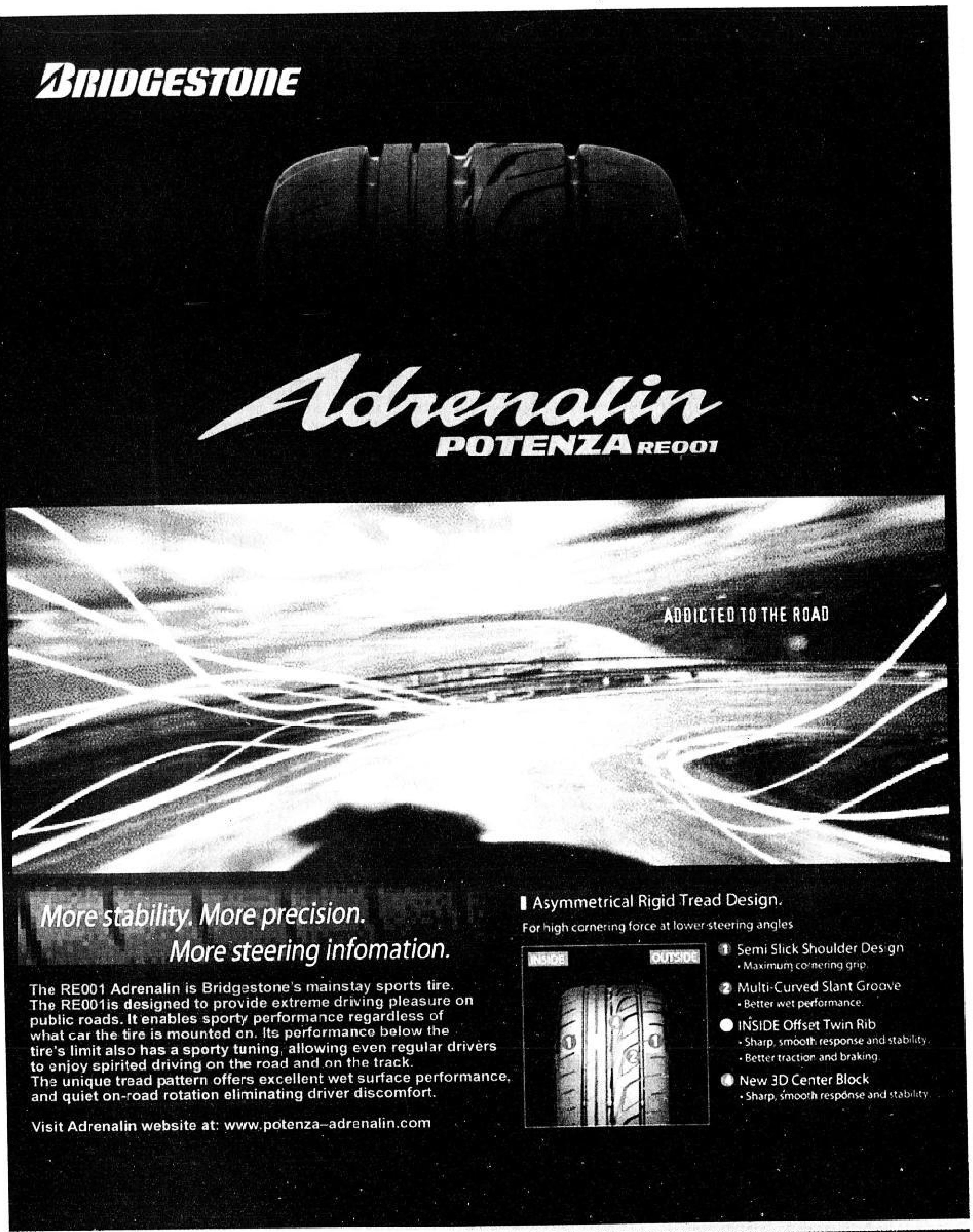
The Chevrolet Captiva boasts of its ability to adapt to customers as their needs progress over the course of a lifetime and was designed to match the lifestyle of today's active customer, whether they needed a daily commuter, a family hauler or a weekend getaway off-roader.

The Captiva is GM Philippine's 8th model to be offered in the local market under the Chevrolet badge. With the introduction of Captiva, Chevrolet now offers an impressive lineup with a model to suit all life stages. The variety of products provides us with more sales opportunities, and the quality and uniqueness of the Captiva, we believe will certainly ignite the market and whet the appetites of existing and potential customers.

The Chevrolet Captiva is equipped with advanced technology that balances the comfort of a sedan, the toughness of an SUV and the versatility of a truck. The Chevrolet Captiva, with a AWD and 2WD 2.4-litre gasoline engine and the 2.0-litre inter-cooled turbo diesel and with a choice of All-Wheel-Drive and 2-Wheel Drive variants, will be available soon in all of Chevrolet's 13 showrooms nationwide.

GM's ongoing commitment in the Philippines has allowed us to continue growing our business which now includes 13 authorized Chevrolet showrooms and service centers, with aggressive plans for further dealership expansion to widen our footprint across the country... and now with the Captiva's introduction, we'll continue to capture valuable market share in this highly competitive field.

Now, together let's explore the new look of the Chevrolet Captiva!



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The RE001 Adrenalin is Bridgestone's mainstay sports tire.
The RE001is designed to provide extreme driving pleasure on public roads. It enables sporty performance regardless of what car the tire is mounted on. Its performance below the tire's limit also has a sporty tuning, allowing even regular drivers to enjoy spirited driving on the road and on the track.
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Visit Adrenalin website at: www.potenza–adrenalin.com

Asymmetrical Rigid Tread Design.
For high cornering force at lower steering angles

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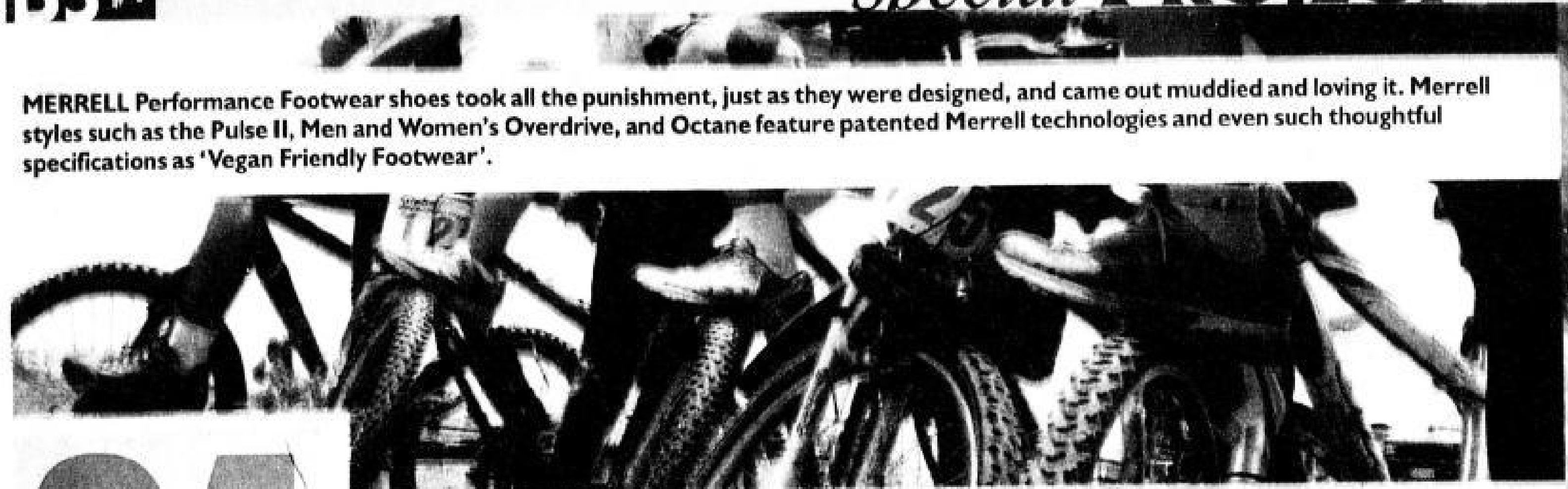
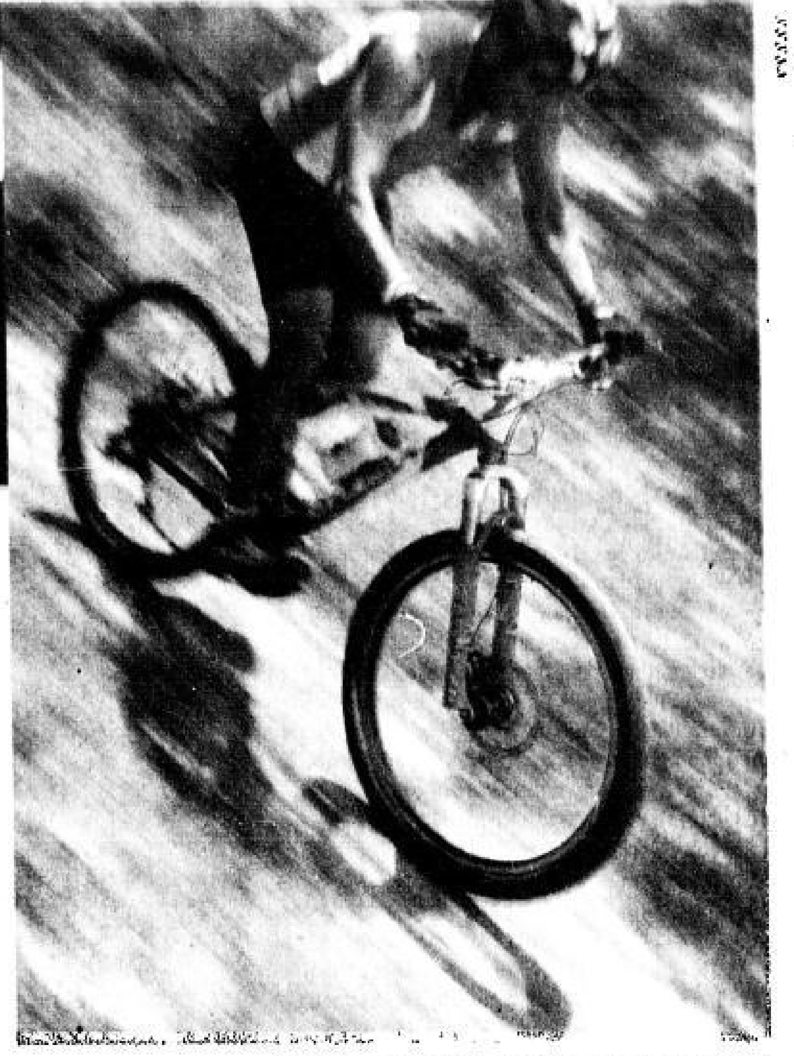
TOYOTA
moving forward



MERRELL Performance Footwear shoes took all the punishment, just as they were designed, and came out muddied and loving it. Merrell styles such as the Pulse II, Men and Women's Overdrive, and Octane feature patented Merrell technologies and even such thoughtful specifications as 'Vegan Friendly Footwear'.



24 hours in the saddle, round-the-clock fun

THE BIKE RACE STARTED 1 p.m., and ended the same time—the next day. For many participants, this would be one of the longest, most grueling races.

The Department of Tourism held the 24-Hour Mountain Bike Endurance Challenge Aug. 11 and 12 at the National Bilibid Prisons Minimum Security Land Reserve in Muntinlupa City.

As the race name and the venue suggested, maximum intimidation embraced all riders even during registration and pre-race briefings. But the mutual excitement to test one's endurance, the bike, and the course overrode all apprehensions, and by the time the starting gun was fired, over 250 elite and amateur mountain bike and outdoor sports athletes from Metro Manila and nearby provinces were running to their bikes to start their conquest of time and trails.

All riders, whether they joined as solo racers or in the 3-member mixed or all-male categories, were required to complete at least 15 laps in the 6-km circuit, which comprised of challenging single tracks, sudden drop-offs, steep ascents and descents, and an energy-sapping run through a construction site with roads dumped with sand and soft earth.

As race think-tank Thumbie Remigio put it, "riders' mountain biking skills were really put to the test in this race." In the end, he assessed, "this wasn't a race against the other biker, but a test of the individual's stamina and nerves."

Everyone—participants and spectators—were in agreement that in the end, the event provided more of the spirit of fun than competition, with many participants admitting this was their first time to race in a 24-hour setting, and in such a unique venue. Some even joked, "*Ingat, kapag maligaw ka, deretso ka sa kulungan* (Be careful, if you get lost in the course you go straight to jail)."

Top-notch bikes and shoes

Naturally, the bikers came into the event with their best rides at hand, and their best performance footwear forward. Not a few among them sported Merrell Performance Footwear.

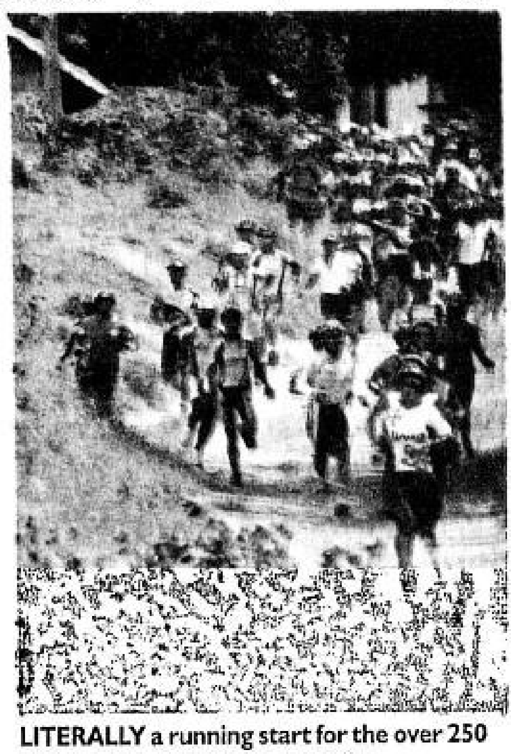
Merrell, indeed, provided the perfect shoe for the event, as riders alternated between riding and carrying their bikes on treacherous passes that required maximum grip on slippery mud and loose earth.

On their bikes, the riders depended on their knobby, all-terrain wheels. But off it, the test of stability and grip fell on the shoes.

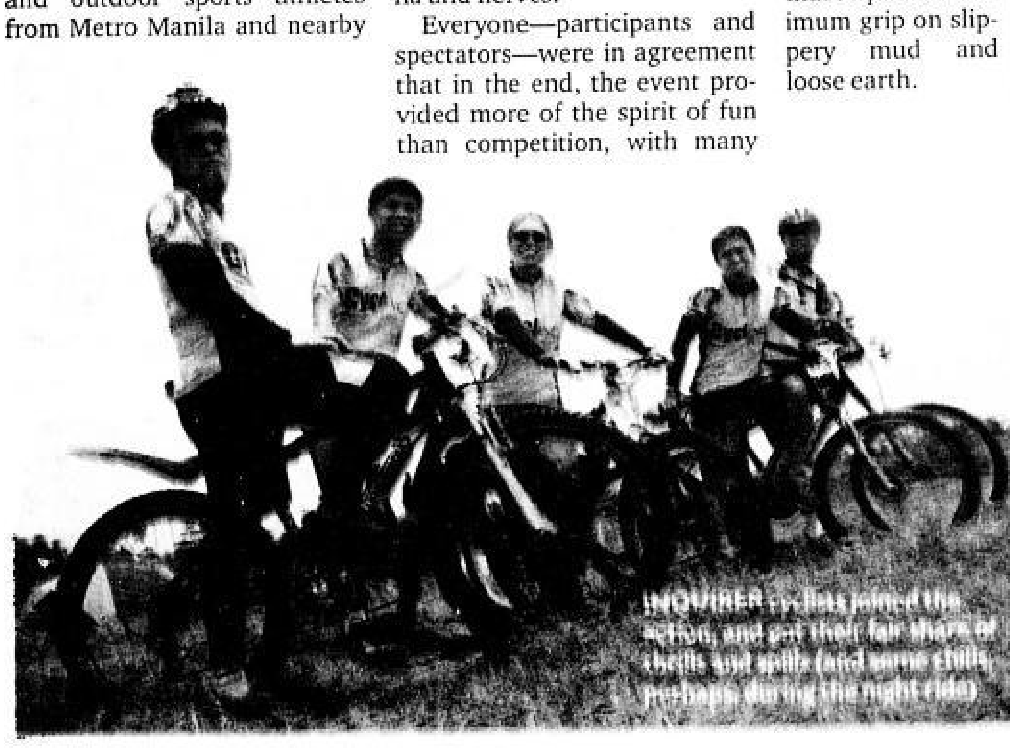
And that's where Merrell took over. Merrell, first conceived in the rugged mountain country of Vernal, Utah, in 1981, has evolved from the reliable hiking boots custom made by its creator Randy Merrell for people who did a lot of traveling on foot in the rough terrain of the area, to today's multidisciplinary athlete and outdoor enthusiast who requires shoes that perform well under any circumstances.

For this 24-hour mountain biking challenge, wearers of Merrell shoes depended on many of the brand's innovative footwear technologies, such as the Air Cushion Midsole and the Omni-Fit Lacing System, and its partnership with technologies such as Serdia by Clarino, Vibram soles, and Thinsulate Insulation.

The DOT 24-hour Mountain Bike Endurance Challenge was sponsored by PMI Colleges, Rush Fitness Water, the City of Muntinlupa, and the National Bilibid Prisons.



LITERALLY a running start for the over 250 elite and amateur mountain bikers



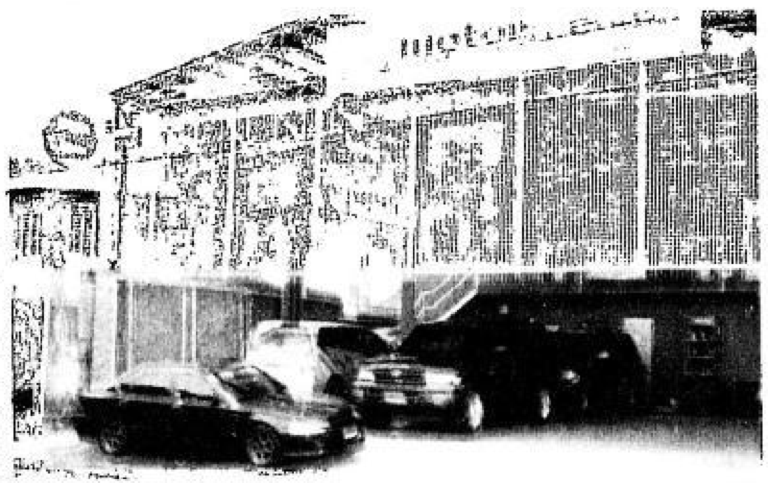
INQUIRER cyclists joined the action, and got their fair share of thrills and spills (and some chills, perhaps, during the night ride)

Meanwhile, back on the Road . . .

The heavy rains and the resulting floods may have kept many road warriors off the streets lately. But their gears have been busy, busy, busy, as the following features suggest.

MEANWHILE/ B3-5

Motul's strategic partner



WHEN IT COMES TO automotive painting, tuning, detailing and restoration, one shop has carved a reputation for its quality and craftsmanship. Located at 51-D. Tuazon Street, Sta Mesa Heights, Quezon City, Motor Pro is regarded as one of the industry's best. Its strict adherence to giving the car its glossy factory finish paint with a touch of expensive aftermarket accessories and that distinctive Motor Pro appeal, has made the shop a byword in the car restoration, body paint and tuning industry. "We only use the best products available in the market. That is why we are proud partners of Motul Oil and Lubricants," adds Ric Wee, president of Motor Pro. Its partnership with Motul is crucial since they use Motul's line of high-performance oil and lubricants for their cars. "We have cars that require a very specific oil to make the engine run smoother. So far, Motul is the only oil we have tested that really adds horsepower and improves the cooling qualities of the engine. We have customers that can swear by the true performance of Motul," adds Oliver Ong, the strategic other half of Motor Pro.

According to Motor Pro, one of their top selling Motul products is the Double Esther technology 300V, a fully synthetic oil which is used as a standard requirement by racing teams Nismo, Takata Dome NSX Honda and Kraft racing Bandai.

Motul's Double Ester technology significantly improves output performance by maintaining high film strength. The ester polymer compound is designed with high molecular strength to withstand constant shearing of oil, as it maintains viscosity even at extremely high engine temperatures ensuring minimal friction and flow resistance during high RPM.

Motul's line of oil and lubricants range from the high-performance 300V series, 100-percent Synthetic Motor Oils for Gas and Diesel, ATF, DIII, Power steering oils, Limited Slip Differential oils, Gear oils, Coolants, Brake fluids and a comprehensive maintenance line. Motul is a certified, recommended and oil of choice of racing teams that compete in the Japan Super GT, World Rallye Championship (WRC), 24-Hour Le Mans, Asia-Pacific Rallye Championship (APRC) and the Moto GP. For details on how to improve your car's performance, call Motor Pro at 411-0777/749-9542 or call Autoplus Sportzentrium at 726-0399, or log on to www.motul.com.ph.

Thule at Campi show

VISITORS TO THE FIRST PHILIPPINE International Motor Show (PIMS) got a glimpse of Thule's loading solutions with its display at the Nissan Motors Philippines Inc (NMPI) booth. An X-Trail SUV was fitted with a roof-mounted bike rack and kayak support system. With years of experience and an extensive research and development program, Thule is the foremost authority when it comes to buying transportation/luggage solutions for leisure or professional use. Thule's aim is to provide the customers a convenient and practical choice to be based on a conscious decision; wanting to transport their equipment safely, easily and in style. Thule's line of roof racks, boxes and bike racks provide reliable, user-friendly product solutions which gives the customers access to the best and widest product range available on the market, with the best conceivable service.

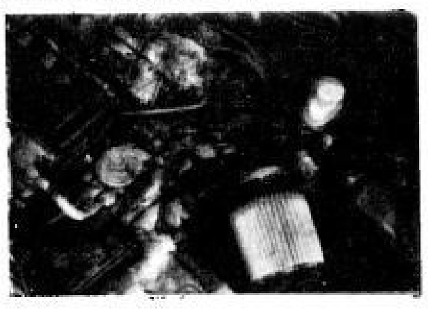
With its patented easy snap on, snap off feature, Thule is unlike any other roof/bike rack system in the local market. This innovative feature allows you install the load carriers with ease. No drilling is required, and all Thule products are guaranteed safe from rust, and is wind tunnel tested to aerodynamically complement the form and function of any vehicle. Thule's line of load carriers are 100 percent machine made from Sweden and has passed the four seasons test of the ISO. Thule is the only accredited OEM roof racks designer in the local market and is a proud supplier of load carriers for brands such as Ford, Volvo, Land Rover, Nissan, Toyota, GM, BMW and Mercedes Benz.

For more information on how to gear up and make your vacation a more adventurous one, load up and visit the Thule-EGR Showrooms in Ortigas Avenue (744-6367) and Pasong Tamo (892-7847) or log on to www.thule.com.

Race engineered for street use

IT IS A POPULAR MISCONCEPTION that one has to be a hard core racer to re-equip your stock air filters with an open type filter. Ordinary everyday people driving stock cars can definitely benefit by replacing your stock filters to a K&N open type filter.

K&N filters are fully washable and never needs replacement, and most cost effective since this type of aftermarket filter carries a lifetime warranty. K&N Filters also gets rid of the restrictive airbox and paper filter element, freeing up space in the engine bay for a cleaner look, giving you more power and better acceleration as well as improved fuel economy. SpeedLab offers a variety of K&N intake systems for popular cars such as the Mazda 3, Nissan Sentra, Nissan X-Trail, BMW 3series, Ford Focus, Honda Civic, Mitsubishi Lancer and a lot more. Check out the wide variety of applications for your vehicle at www.speedab.com.ph or get in touch with them at 376-4648/51.



Ask GIBS

Mechanic-at-large Giby Yalung answers your most pressing automotive problems

Dear Gibs

I own a Nissan Sentra (B14) and would like to ask if it is advisable to overhaul my engine even if it does not seem to be slow or damaged. My car is a 1995 model and dutifully maintained at a Nissan dealership. It has run 243,000 km already, but nothing is wrong with it. I was just advised by a friend that the pistons or bearings might be loose already. Is this right? Should I let go of the car? Or should I overhaul even if it is not needed?

Gregory from Nagtahan

Dear Gregory,

At over 240,000 km, it may seem that you're already a good candidate for an overhaul despite the religious maintenance of your Sentra. The simple two rules to know if you need an overhaul is the oil pressure and oil compression test. If the compression of your cylinders have gone down tremendously (manifested by hard starts at morning when the piston rings are cold and hasn't heat expanded to seal the gap between the tolerance of the cylinder walls), then it's a good indication that you need a quick compression test done by your reliable mechanic.

Another way is to check for signs of "blow by", wherein the oil from the crankcase leaks through the piston rings and sleeves, generating white smoke during acceleration and deceleration. This also causes your engine to "eat oil", forcing you to add a liter or two of oil every now and then. Blow by leads to substantial power loss and added fuel consumption.

The bottom line is to have your engine oil thoroughly checked to avoid guesswork. Even if the engine seems to be strong enough, the symptoms above will tell you whether you can still hang in there with your car, or you have to dig deep into your pockets.

Gibs

Advice for driving through floods

It's the rainy season and floods are again part of Metro Manila's sea, err, landscape. Here are some quick tips for negotiating floods:

1. Use your eyes. Observe other similar sized-cars braving the flooded area. If you see that the water is half the height of their vehicle's tire diameter, think twice. If you see the water hits their headlights, forget it. You'll surely ruin your engine's computer box.

2. If you have to charge into the flood, stay in the middle of the road where the road height is at its peak.

3. If you hear the floodwater sloshing your floor pan, turn off your air con and lights and shift to 1st gear, or L if you're on automatic, and keep the RPMs high to keep your fan belts running and your exhaust pipe free from flooding.

4. Diesel-powered engines can get damaged by floods. Water seeping into the air intakes can instantly break your pistons and engine block. Don't believe the fallacy that diesel is indestructible with floods.

5. If ever you get through deep floods, never run your car fast as your brakes are still wet. Dry up your pads and rotors using the "stop and go" technique by applying the brakes after running a short distance, and repeating the procedure until the brakes perform normally.

6. After going through floods, check your alterantor, fan motors, compressors, distributor caps, fan belts, headlights, tail lights, carpets, door locks, front and rear brakes and even your constant velocity joints if they need to be re-greased and repacked. Floodwaters can soak your bearings and dilute the oil and grease, causing premature corrosion and mechanical failure.

7. If the floodwater is too high that it already enters through the door sills of the car, turn off the engine to prevent water from seeping into the intake and permanently ruining your car's engine. It's time to have the car pushed out of the flooded area as quickly as possible.

8. Use common sense. Plan your trip and assess the flood situation in your area. Maybe you're better off not going out after all. Chances are, if it's flooded in your area, it'll be flooded almost everywhere in the metropolis, as well. So why rush?

Good luck and drive safely.

Gibs

For any questions, e-mail askgibs.roadtalk@gmail.com

Meanwhile, back on the road . . .

From page B3-4

Image and performance

WHILE SOME DO IT TO improve the aesthetics of their ride, most tuning enthusiasts equip their cars with lightweight, wide or bigger set of rims and tires to improve vehicle stability during high performance or wet weather driving. TSW is widely popular in Europe but is also a major force in North and South America, New Zealand and South Africa. Now Wheel Gallery brings TSW to Philippines shores.

TSW is born of a rich racing heritage. Founded by a former Formula One racing driver, TSW has been involved in motor racing around the globe for over 30 years. TSW's involvement with motorsports has ranged from the grueling 24-hour Le Mans to Touring Cars to Spec Miata.

Majority of TSW wheels are based on racing technology. TSW pioneered the race-inspired hex nut look that was featured in such standards as the Revo and Hockenheim R, which have been a popular choice for both grassroots racing and show cars. In keeping with this rich racing heritage, many TSW wheels are named after past and present Formula One tracks.

Wheel Gallery offers TSW in an absolutely staggering array of staggered wheel applications. Several sizes carry as many as three different widths for the perfect fitment for luxury cars, SUVs and executive saloons. Staggered wheels are available in sizes from 17" to 22" staggered wheel applications. Staggered applications mean a wider wheel on the rear of the car, and consequently, a wider tire and larger lip on the back of the car. Many of the wheels are available in hyper black and hyper silver paint finishes with machine cut lips (often referred to as diamond cut or mirror cut). Although chrome is becoming more popular with TSW enthusiasts, hyper black wheels and hyper silver wheels dominate the current TSW wheel lineup.

TSW wheels are sold with hub centric to rings to ensure a vibration-free ride. TSW wheels are manufactured to extremely high standards that often significantly exceed the industry norm, resulting in a smoother, better handling ride.

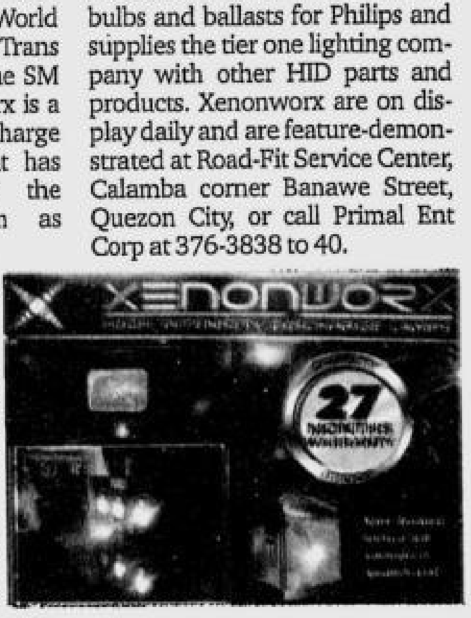
For inquiries on how to improve your automotive image and performance, visit Wheel Gallery at 318 Santolan Road corner M. Paterno, San Juan or call 724-2739 or 726-0965, or log on to www.conceptonewheels.com. TSW is also available in select dealers nationwide.

Daylight intensity at night

PRIMAL ENTERPRISES CORP, one of the country's leading distributor of car accessories and products, distributor of well-known brands like Vic filters, Fiamm horns, Deflector plate security covers and weatherguards/sunvisors, Sunbloc metallized professional-grade tint films, and Floor Guard car mats, has added a new brand of quality products: Xenonworx.

Launched in the Manila International Auto Show at the World Trade Center and in the Trans Sport Show 2007 held at the SM Megatrade Halls, Xenonworx is a brand of High Intensity Discharge (HID) lighting system that has been developed around the gaseous element known as Xenon-the 54th entry in the Periodic Table of Elements. Lighting systems of this kind produce a high-intensity light that simulates daylight at night, but consume only minimal power, thus lasting longer than any other kind of vehicle lighting systems.

Xenonworx attracted a lot of attention during the trade exhibits when, to demonstrate its water-resistant feature, a ballast and its xenon bulb was fully submerged in an aquarium tank and continued to work. Xenonworx offers the widest choice of unique color temperatures to meet one's individual preference. Inset shows a booth visitor checking out the wide range of color temperatures from Xenonworx lamps-from the yellows, to the blues, to the pinks. Xenonworx now manufactures bulbs and ballasts for Philips and supplies the tier one lighting company with other HID parts and products. Xenonworx are on display daily and are feature-demonstrated at Road-Fit Service Center, Calamba corner Banawe Street, Quezon City, or call Primal Ent Corp at 376-3838 to 40.



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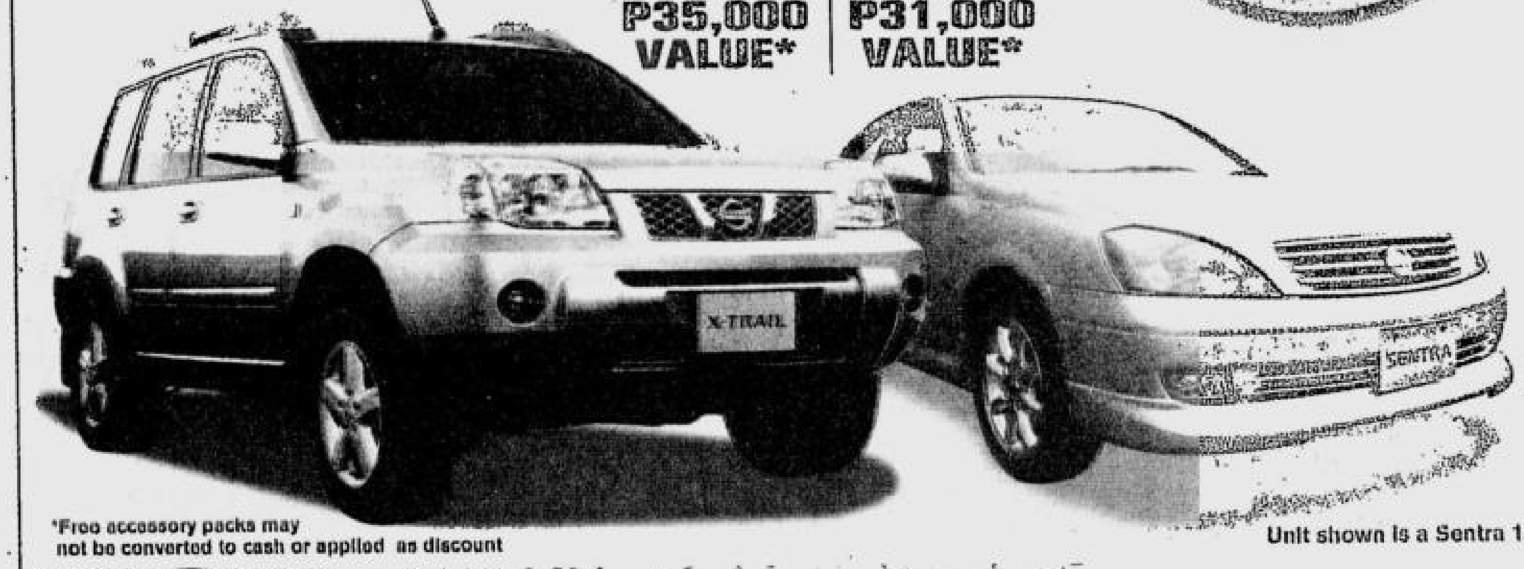

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Unit shown is a Sentra 1.6.

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X-TRAIL 2.5 4X4 250	1,270,000	254,000	23,811	635,000	14,882
X-TRAIL 2.5 4X4 250X	1,380,000	276,000	25,873	690,000	16,171
Sentra 1.6 GSX MT	750,000	150,000	13,593	375,000	8,320
Sentra 1.6 GS AT	835,000	167,000	15,186	417,500	9,316
Sentra 1.3 GX AT	660,000	132,000	12,374	330,000	7,734
Sentra 1.3 GX MT PWR	630,000	126,000	11,812	315,000	7,382

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KILL Switch

Two wheels of misfortune

Raymond Tribdino

Ahhh..the truth is indeed stranger than fiction

PARAPHRASING THE GREAT HECKLER RODNEY Dangerfield's most abused "I get no respect," I say "we (motorcyclists) get no respect."

After Bayani Fernando's "stick-your-license plate-on-your-helmet" proposal, comes Alfredo Lim's "nothing behind your back (a.k.a. no back riders allowed) policy in his native Manila. Now government has taken away our roads from us by banning completely the use of both the South and North Luzon expressways.

After Señor Bayani and Captain Lim stereotype motorcyclists as criminals and lawbreakers. Riders are always the road antagonists, every rider seems to be tagged as a rowdy, unruly and impetuous minion of evil. While not every rider is a criminal, every criminal can be a rider. Fair logic?

The managers of the SLEX and NLEX prevent motorcyclists from benefiting from the highways by a policy called the Limited Highway Access (LHA). This lengthy regulation, obviously written by those whose only means of transport have four or more wheels, supposedly equitably governs the use of the expressways.

Having had the privilege of seeing the highways of Europe, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia (the last two countries have a combined motorcycle population of about 9 million) all I can say is the authors of the LHA have a lot to see and learn.

The legend of the LHA goes way back to the sixties. One version, according to my late father-in-law Nicasio Escolano Sr, had to do with a salakot and a dead police escort.

Tatay Nick, as I called him, was a rider himself and would regularly travel to Bicol on board his Honda CB250 to visit his hometown of Gubat in Sorsogon. My mother-in-law was a usual fixture on the rear saddle of his thumper on their hops to Manila from San Pablo. Weathered sepia photographs revealed they wore funny leather-covered helmets with chin straps the size of a wrestler's arm band.

He was witness to the arrival of then Republican nominee Richard Nixon to the inauguration of the International Rice Research Institute in Los Baños, Laguna. Tatay Nick heard the story of the dead police escort who was riding the police version of his CB250.

His version of the story went something like this: One of the police escorts, an experienced rider at that, too, suffered a heat stroke in the long ride under the scorching sun. That same story points to the strange truth that the cops were wearing salakots instead of safety helmets as government, wanting to give Mr. Nixon a traditional Filipino hello, ordered them to do so.

To save face, the Department of Public Works and Communications, sole gatekeeper of what is concrete and asphalt, penned a sweeping order. The result was an immediate ban of motorcycles from the tollways was put in place.

Ahhh..the truth is indeed stranger than fiction.

A couple of weeks ago I rode down the ABI passageway into the SLEX and upon reaching the tollgate, I was stopped by a shotgun wielding traffic enforcer who told me with impunity "to go back to where I came from" (literally, and in Tagalog). If that wasn't bad enough I was told never to pass by SLEX as the total ban on motorcycles on the highway was soon to be enforced.

Fast forward to Aug. 17 and along the SLEX on my way to work in Sta. Rosa. An underbone with a back ride, both without helmets cut into my path from the right side. They sneak into the road shoulder.

I slow down to take a look and behold it looked like some employees of the PNCC breaking their own rules. Small displacement motorcycles, no helmet and proper riding gear, texting and calling while riding. How bad can it be? Answer: very bad.

If you want to see my photographic proof that those entrusted to take care of the SLEX laws (no matter who they are) are the most blatant violators, please visit www.killswitch525.multiply.com. There are other interesting motorcycle pictures there, too.

Please send your comments to: killswitch.roadtalk@gmail.com.

Free carwash at the malls

A WELCOME SURPRISE AWAITS ALL FORD vehicle owners. On special weekends, FordService goes around Metro Manila malls and gives complimentary carwash to all Ford vehicles. These malls include Alabang Town Center, Glorietta, Greenbelt, Eastwood City, Greenhills Shopping Center, Powerplant and Gateway. On top of this exclusive treat, they also receive coupons which entitle them to 5-percent discount on genuine Ford parts and accessories and 10-percent discount on labor on their next visit to any Ford dealership from now until Oct. 28. This promotion is a venue to thank valued customers for driving a Ford. FordService definitely creates a delightful and enduring ownership experience. No one knows and satisfies customers better like FordService does. Experience FordService in your nearest Ford dealership. In Metro Manila, Ford can be found in Alabang, Balintawak, Commonwealth, Edsa Greenhills, Connecticut, Libis, Makati, Manila, Quezon Avenue and Shaw Boulevard. In the provinces, Ford dealerships are located in Bacolod, Cabanatuan, Cagayan de Oro, Cavite, Cebu, Dagupan, Davao, Iloilo, and Pampanga.

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STORY ON PAGE C2

'N & BEAUTY

FAR LEFT: Easy Flirt. Drawstring bag in grained leather, monogrammed canvas lining, available in majorelle blue, mocha, black and orange. Left: Califourchon. Large shoulder bag in leather, available in red, ivory and mocha.

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- Get special rates from these participating hotels: Hotel InterContinental (815-9711), The Peninsula Manila (810-3456), Renaissance Makati City Hotel Manila (811-6888), Ascott Makati (729-8888), and Mandarin Oriental Manila (750-8888).

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KATRINA Ponce Enrile with top chef Ed Quimson

CATHY Romualdez and Via Reyes

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CINDERELLA'S FAB GALS: Marielle and Therese Santos

ALVARO Del Rosario Pertierra and Bibing Montelibano Villanueva

JOEL and Gidget Jimenez of GMA-7

KIM Camacho and Ching Cruz

Stuffed and satiated at the Pink Kitchen

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

I ARRIVED WITH TATLER EDITOR **Anton San Diego** on the first day of the two-day Pink Kitchen's fundraiser to fight the big C. I was really shocked that the Rockwell Tent was elbow-to-elbow, *palanggas*.

We dashed over to the Moroccan booth, but the food was sold out, as were the other booths offering international cuisine. But we got our fill of Brama Kumaris from San Benito farm and from the Cuban stall, dahlings. Both were also havens for those with sweet tooth, *palanggas*.

Just as varied as the cuisine were the food fans that rocked the Rockwell Tent. We saw top artist **Anita Magsaysay-Ho** as well as people of different political colors such as **Imelda Marcos, Irene Araneta**, Makati Mayor **Jejomar Binay**, Sen. **Sergio Osmeña III**, Rep. **Teddy Boy Locsin**, Rep. **Gilbert Remulla** and **Georgia Remulla**, former Representative **Charlie Cojuangco**, and former Senator **Orly Mercado** and **Suzy Pineda**.

Also present were **Vivian Yuchengco, Philip Romualdez** and PDI president **Sandy Prieto, Susan Reyes, Carol Masibay, Mons** and **Sander Tantoco** with daughter **Kara, Marivic Rufino** and **Maritess Pineda**.

The ABS-CBN Publishing *famille* came in full force: **Ernie** and **Jeena Lopez**; slim, well-groomed **Monchet Olives**; **Raul Manzano, Philip Cu-unjieng, Chris Lopez** and **Ipe Cruz**.

Also seen were adorable TV hotshot **Cheche Lazaro**, eye-catcher **Pia Guanio, Bibeth Orteza** and **Carlitos Siguion Reyna**, fab singer **Bituin Escalante**, and **Ces Drilon**.

Before the two-day happening ended, guests were already clamoring for it to be held twice a month. "No, that's too exhausting. Hopefully we will do it twice a year," said the very proud organizer **Bettina Lopez Osmeña**, dahlings.

I must congratulate the *tres* prestigious Enderun College students, who served as waiters and waitresses, for a fabulous job, *palanggas*.

ICanServe is a foundation that empowers women by providing information on breast cancer and subsidizing cancer treatment of women. It seeks to pioneer a nationwide early breast cancer-detection program. Want more info? Check out www.icanserve.net, call 6873942, or e-mail icanserve@yahoo.com.

L-Day

She's very low-profile, *palanggas*, but when she turned another fab year, her children—**Jun, Tina, Mari, Marilet** and **Cris**—as well as her high-profile siblings—**Nene Leonor, Bong Santos** and **Fe Rodriguez**—organized a super fun surprise bash. We are referring to the civic-oriented **Letty Santos Bonoan**, dahlings.

It was nice and cool at the sprawling ancestral Pasay City home of the Leonors which had century-old trees.

Letty's close pals came in full force, *palanggas*, such as those from the Rotary Club of Makati, Forbes Park, Dasma, Bel Air, and Quezon City Sports Club, where Letty used to play tennis during her younger years. Also present were her bridge pals.

Old friends from way back greeted her such as former education secretary **Armand Fabella** and **Marinela Fabella, Pat Ejercito de Guzman, Pacita Zara**, Philippine Nuclear Research Institute director **Alumanda de la Rosa** and deputy director **Corazon Bernido**.

As always, that hostess with the mostest, Nene Leonor, prepared the gastronomic choices on the buffet table.

Other invitees included **Toto** and **Pachot Mapa** of Old Asia, former Land Bank president **Sonny Vistan**, Justice **Santiago Ranada Jr., Manny** and **Lulu Recto, Nancy Padilla**, and **Boy** and **Pilar Batac**.

Surf bash

Now that the rains have finally arrived and summer is officially over, the city socials' tan has faded (the real ones, anyway) and they have returned to town from the beaches, *palanggas*.

But there was, however, a stray summer bash, Inshore, promoted by the hot cybersmart team of **Cacay Moras** and **Liza Tan**. It took place in the oh-so-fabulous Nuvo in Greenbelt 2.

Hostess was the stunningly beautiful Cebuana **Daniella Sevilla**, no less.

The big come-on was definitely the candy-colored fashion production that showed the latest collections of Quiksilver, Roxy, Ripcurl, Oakley and Reef. The models sported Dakine bags and Get Happy accessories. Shu Uemura and Kiehl's Stylist Series had the models looking wow!

This was the third series of surf-bashes thrown by Stone Money Surf, which is led by board rider **Joe Villatora** and surf development officer **Gino Canlas**.

Adidas gig

Renowned Adidas came out with its latest eye-catching Fall-Winter collection. It held a fast-paced fashion show at the Rigodon Ballroom of the Peninsula Manila which was superbly hosted by MTV VJ **Andi9** and basketball expert **Vito Lazatin**.

Aprés a yummy lunch, hotshot Adidas managing director **Joey Singian** proudly gave a short talk about Adidas's fab innovations, *palanggas*.

The presentation began with new Sport Performance Line modeled by professional basketball players **Doug Kramer, Wesley Gonzales, Kelvin dela Peña**, and **JC Intal**.

It was followed by the awesome new women's and men's lines, while the cool Stella McCartney collection had Adidas models showing off the perfect blend of sports and chic fashion, which was acknowledged with wild applause, dahlings.

"Adidas is the inspirational brand that will always dream the impossible for years to come," explained Singian.

Hey, check out the new awesome Adidas collections, *palanggas*.

BUSINESS tycoon Oscar Lopez

INEZ Cabarrus of Enderun conducting a wine seminar

NORA Robles

TESSIE Arrieta

LULU Recto

CAUSE-ORIENTED women: Pink Kitchen's organizers Libet Cu-unjieng Virata, Beth Romualdez, Kara Magsanoc Alikpala, Bettina Lopez Osmeña and Minnie Jentes

TITA Trillo with Madame Imelda Marcos

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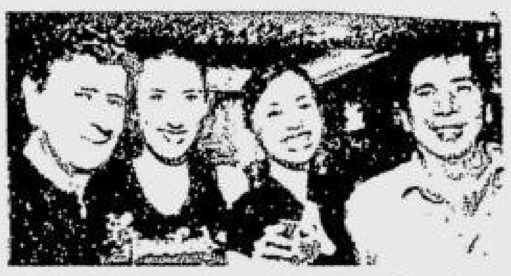
MOI with Cacay Moras, Liza Tan and Louie Ysmael

ALI and Lutz Kunack with their daughter Julia; Andreas Bucher and Josephine del Gallego

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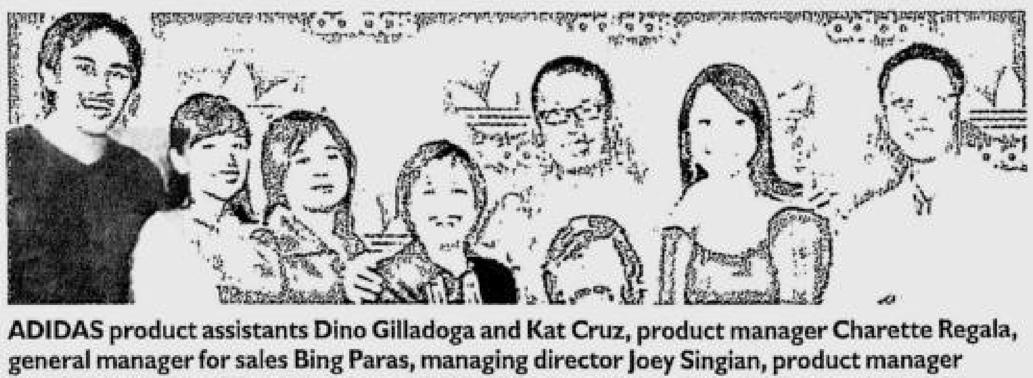
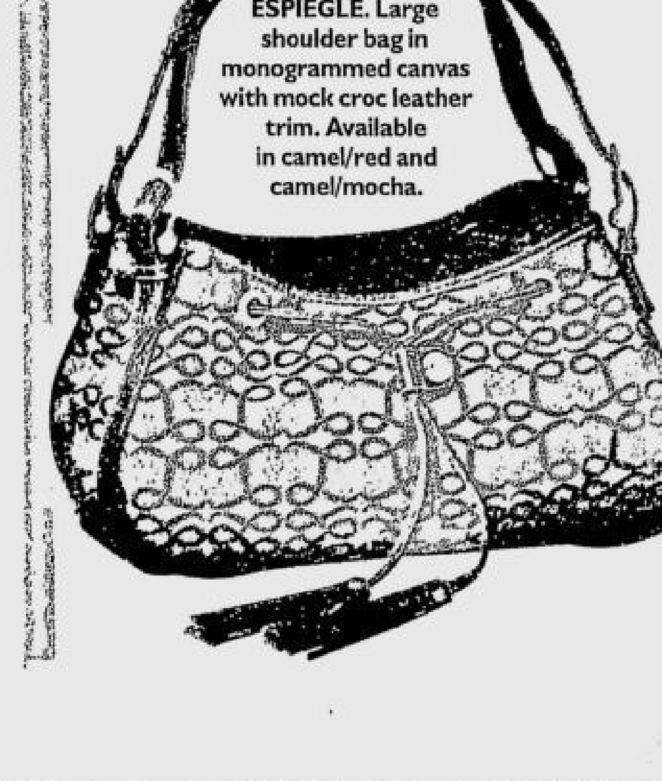
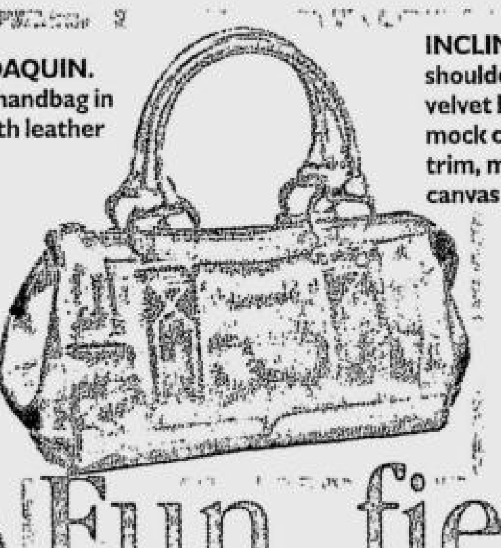

ADIDAS product assistants Dino Gilladoga and Kat Cruz, product manager Charette Regala, general manager for sales Bing Paras, managing director Joey Singian, product manager Pamela So, and group product manager Toti Wong

KRIS Lawrence

BIANCA King


ESPIEGLE. Large shoulder bag in monogrammed canvas with mock croc leather trim. Available in camel/red and camel/mocha.


BALDAQUIN. Gold handbag in smooth leather

INCLINATION. Large shoulder bag in mocha velvet leather with mock crocodile leather trim, monogrammed canvas lining

ELSA. Drawstring bag in monogrammed canvas with leather trim. Available in camel.

Fun, fiery, flirty

PLAYFUL, ELEGANT AND CAREfree are words that define Lancel's Fall-Winter 2007 collection.

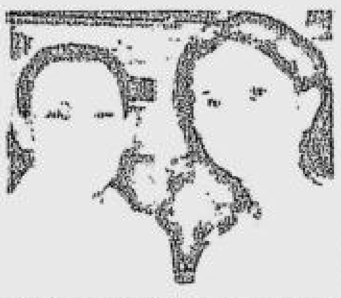
Fiercely independent, the Lancel woman isn't afraid to break rules and find fulfillment in a world of her own. This sense of freedom finds expression in Lancel's line of bags.

The Flirt line is inspired by the insouciance of modern Paris, while the Easy Flirt line is for women with lives devoted to pleasure. Califourchon, meanwhile, mirrors bold defiance and a fiery temperament.

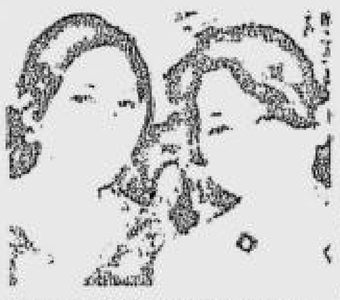
Lancel bags and leather accessories are exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Riviera Retail Inc. Lancel stores are located at 2/L, Shangri-La Mall (tel. 6319775), Glorietta 4 and TriNoma. Visit www.lancel.com.

KATRINA Ponce Enrile with top chef Ed Quimson

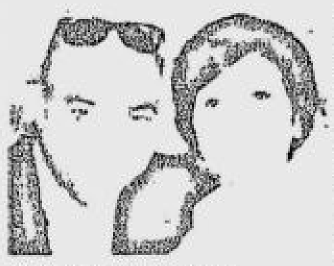
CATHY Romualdez and Via Reyes



BING BING Gonzales and Pin Cojuangco Guingona



CINDERELLA'S FAB GALS: Marielle and Therese Santos



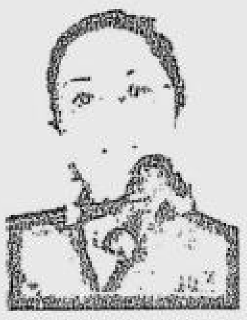
ALVARO Del Rosario Pertierra and Bibing Montelibano Villanueva

JOEL and Gidget Jimenez of GMA-7

KIM Camacho and Ching Cruz

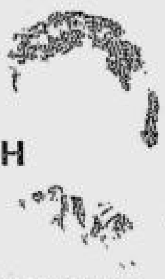
Stuffed and satiated at the Pink Kitchen

BUSINESS tycoon Oscar Lopez



INEZ Cabarrus of Enderun conducting a wine seminar

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH



Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare

I ARRIVED WITH TATLER EDITOR **Anton San Diego** on the first day of the two-day Pink Kitchen's fundraiser to fight the big C. I was really shocked that the Rockwell Tent was elbow-to-elbow, *palanggas*.

We dashed over to the Moroccan booth but the food was sold out, as were the other booths offering international cuisine. But we got our fill of Brama Kumaris from San Benito farm and from the Cuban stall, dahlings. Both were also havens for those with sweet tooth, *palanggas*.

Just as varied as the cuisine were the food fans that rocked the Rockwell Tent. We saw top artist **Anita Magsaysay-Ho** well a people of different political olor such a **Imelda Marcos**, **Irene Araneta**, Makati Mayor **Jejomar Binay**, Sen. **Sergio Osmeña III**, Rep **Teddy Boy Locsin**, Rep. **Gilbert Remulla** and **Georgia Remulla**, former Representative **Charlie Cojuangco**, and former Senator **Orly Mercado** and **Suzy Pineda**.

Also present were **Vivian Yuchengco**, **Philip Romualdez** and PDI president **Sandy Prieto**, **Susan Reyes**, **Carol Masibay**, **Mons** and **Sander Tantoco** with daughter **Kara**, **Marivic Rufino** and **Maritess Pineda**.

The ABS-CBN Publishing *famille* full fo **Ernie** and **Jeena Lopez**, slim well-groomed **Monchet Olives**, **Raul Manzano**, **Philip Cu-unjieng**, **Chris Lopez** and **Ipe Cruz**.

Also seen were adorabl otshot **Cheche Lazaro** catcher **Pia Guanio**, **Bibeth Orteza** and **Carlitos Siguion Reyna**, tab nge **Bituin Escalante** and **Ces Drilon**.

Befo ndec oring month. hat isti we will do it twic id th ganizer **Bettina Lopez Osmeña**.

I must congratulat th erun Colleg s and waitr s.

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NORA Robles

TESSIE Arrieta

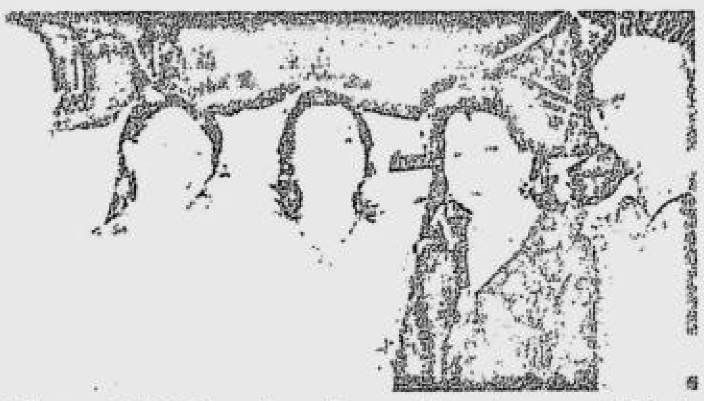
LULU Recto

L-Day

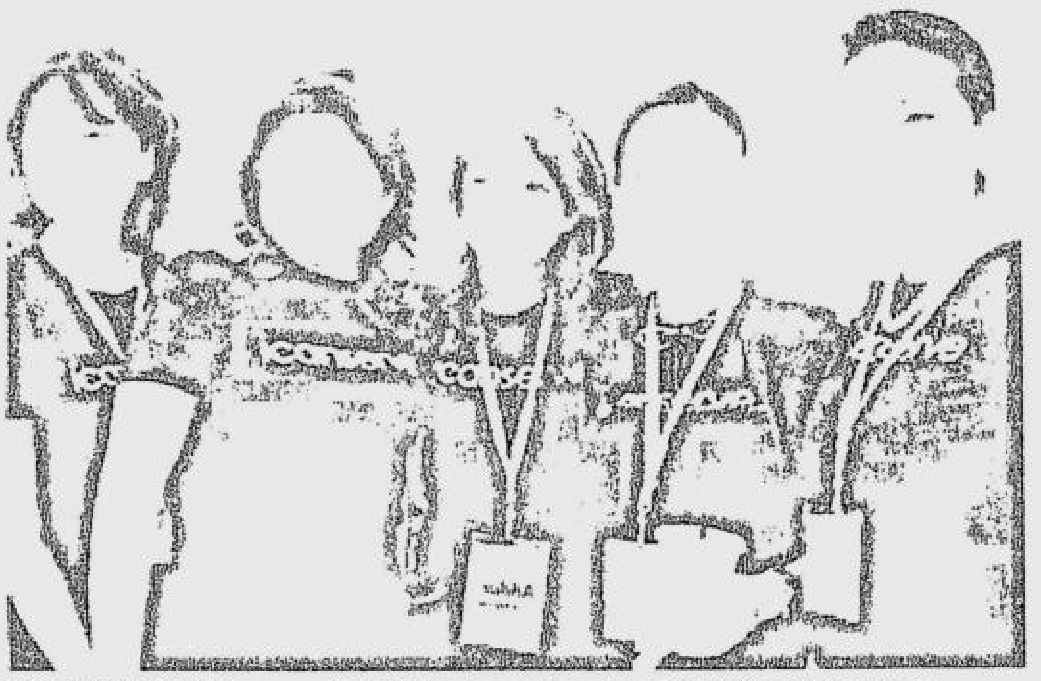
She very low profile *palanggas* hen she turned another fab year, he dren—Jun, Tina, Mari, Marilet and Cris—as well as her high-profile siblings—**Nene Leonor**, **Bong Santos** and **Fe Rodriguez**—organized a super fun surprise bash. We are referring to the civic-oriented **Letty Santos Bonoan**, dahlings.

It was nice and cool at the sprawling ancestral Pasay City home of the Leonors which had century old trees.

Letty's close pals came in full force *palang* such as those from the Rotary Club o



BONG Santos, Fe Rodriguez, Letty Bonoan, Nene Leonor and Alfred "Totoy" Santos



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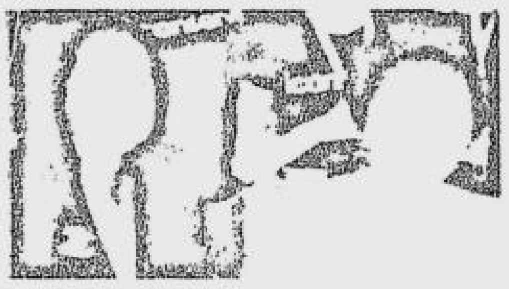
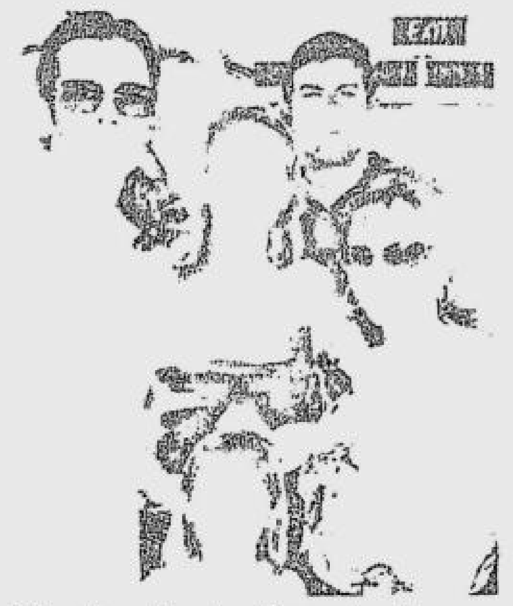


TITA Trillo with Madame Imelda Marcos

ANITA Magsaysay-Ho with Pinky Roxas and Dr. Augusto Camara



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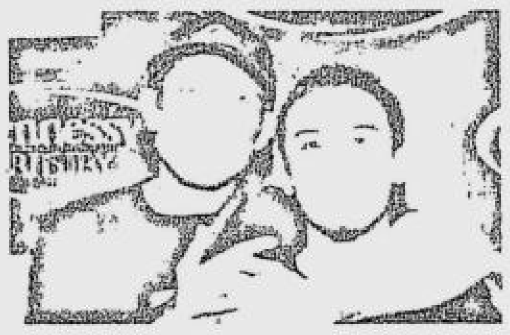

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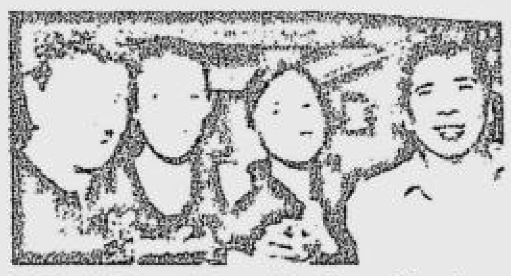


MOI with Cacay Moras, Liza Tan and Louie Ysmael

Qu pla present w

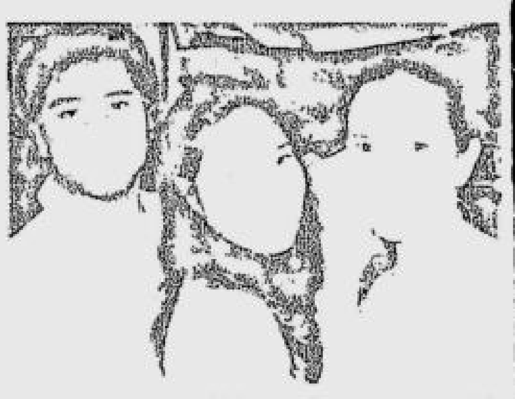
Old frie ted her ach form Armand Fabella and Marinela Fabella, Pat Ejercito de Guzman, Pacita Zara, Philippin Nu Research Ins Alumanda de la Rosa and de r Corazon Bernido.

Ne nor hoices of th ad

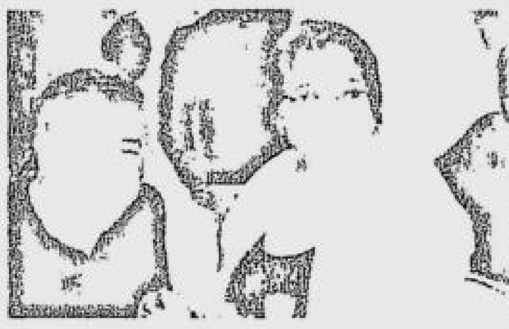
Other invite d: Toto and Pachot Mapa of Old Ma former and Ban dent Sonny Vistan, Justice Santiago Ranada Jr., Manny and Lulu Recto, Nancy Padilla, and Boy and Pilar Batac.

Surf bash

Now that nally nd umme officiall the ials ta has faded (tl on way and



RICO Ocampo and his daughter Bettina with Mia Borromeo, soon-to-be editor of Town and Country magazine



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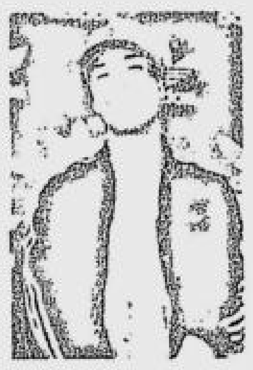
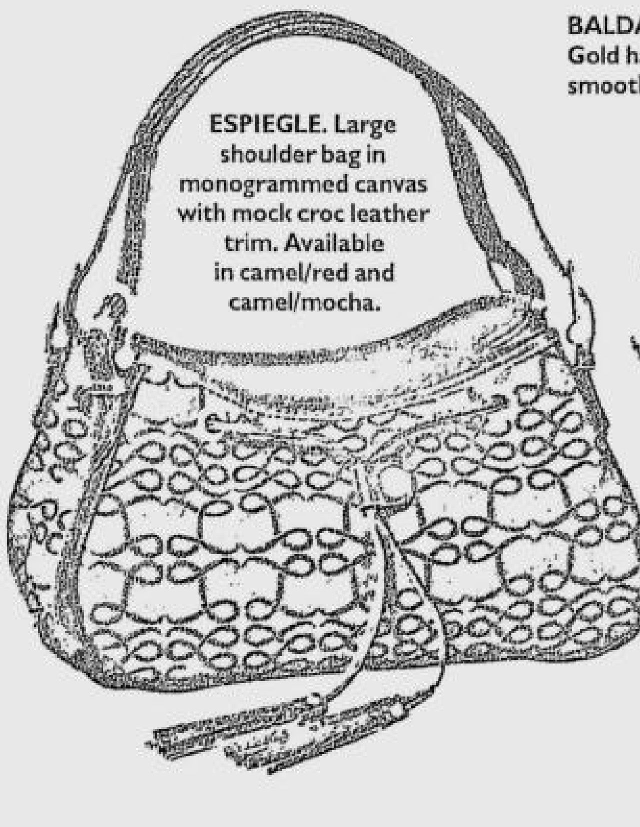


KRIS Lawrence

BIANCA King



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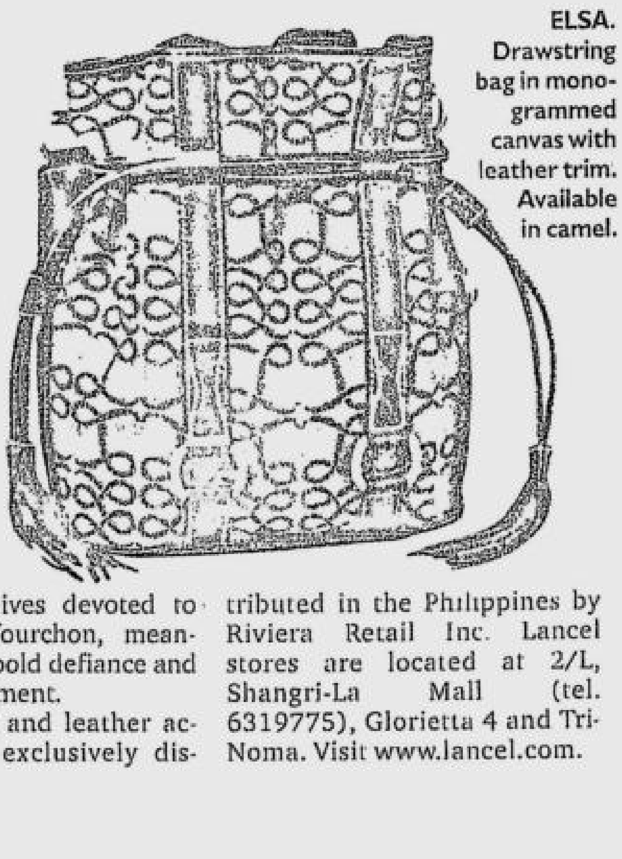

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METRO Society's Editor in Chief Raul Manzano with ABS-CBN Publishing Ernie Lopez

INQUIRER editor in chief Letty Magsanoc with Teyet Pascual and Sonia Mathay

RC and Dulce Constantino with Makati mayor Jejomar Binay

CARLA Tengco with son Javi

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What you see is what you get, down right straight to the point. No Calorie. All sweetness. Just take a look at Multimedia Lifestyle icon ANGEL AQUINO & World Bowling Living Legend, PAENG NEPOMUCENO. Both of them have virtually led a career of sustained excellence and they certainly know how to remain on top of their respective fields. This includes the healthy choices they make, and for Angel & Paeng, it could only be ZERO, the zero calorie sweetener. The BFAD approved sucralose based artificial sweetener tastes uncannily like sugar, just add to your favorite beverage and experience your drink like never before. For the culinary expert, ZERO Cook & Bake is ideal for your desired creations with intensified sweetness minus the after taste. Know the difference, buy ZERO, the zero calorie sweetener.

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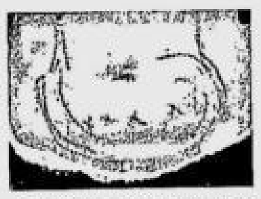

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**Like most Zunic clients, this particular client values her privacy, and we completely respect that. Her comments, however, may be viewed on page 5 of the Comment Journal at the lobby of our Makati Avenue branch.*

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A triple treat of great buys, savings and fun at 3 SM malls

Super shopping, fabulous fun and big savings are in store for SM Supermallers during the 3-DAY SALE at SM Southmall Las Piñas, SM City San Lazaro, and SM Supercenter Pasig on the weekend of August 31, September 1 and 2.

Participating establishments in all three malls have lined up an exciting array of merchandise pegged at attractive discounts of up to 50% off.

On sale are trendy clothes, electronic gadgets, quality cosmetics, shoes and fashion accessories, appliances, home furnishings and so much more!

Rediscover these exciting mall features during the 3-DAY SALE:

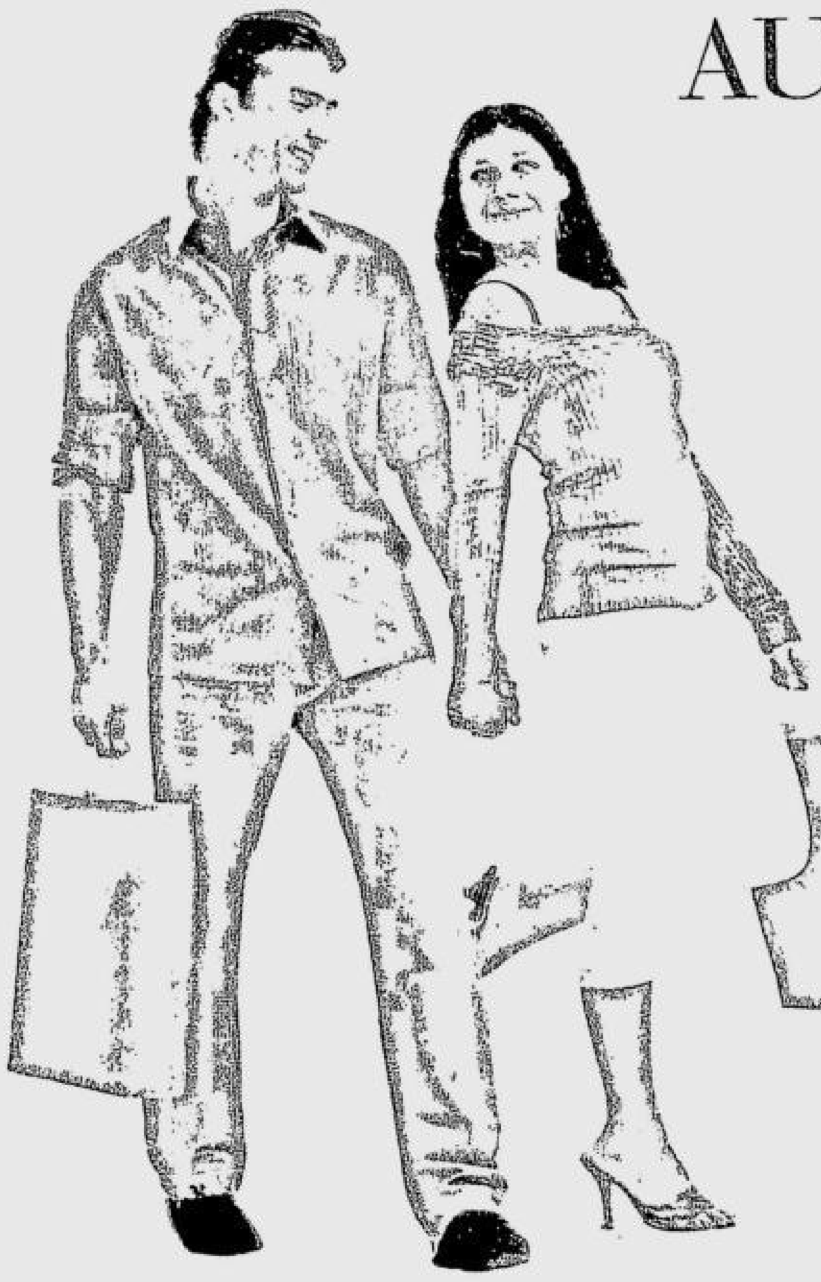
SM SOUTHMALL LAS PIÑAS is home to STORYLAND, the *fun*-tastic in-mall theme park for the whole family.

SM CITY SAN LAZARO is the convenient stop-over shopping venue of Manila commuters.

SM SUPERCENTER PASIG is extending its mall hours from 10 am to 12 midnight on August 31 and September 1. This means you can shop closer to home at longer hours during the 3-DAY SALE!

3 DAY SALE

AUG 31 • SEPT 1 • 2



UP TO

50% OFF

GREAT SELECTIONS MALLWIDE

Mall hours: 10am - 10pm

Get lucky! Take home a sights n' sounds prize

A total of 15 fun prizes will be raffled off during the 3-DAY SALE. Each participating mall will be giving away 5 units of NEXT BASE portable DVD players with 7-inch color monitors (one unit per winner).

How to join? A ₱500 single-receipt purchase from any participating mall establishment (food or non-food) qualifies you to one raffle coupon.

Boost your chances to WIN!

SM FOODCOURT

Meet to eat at SM FOODCOURT. Every ₱150 single or accumulated purchase entitles you to one raffle coupon!

You can also win iPods, tickets to a Black-Eyed Peas concert, and more in SM Foodcourt's Soup-er Prizes promo!

SM CINEMA

Watch your favorite stars in their latest flick at SM CINEMA. Every single purchase of four cinema tickets qualifies you to join the DVD player raffle promo!

Storyland

Take time out with your family or friends and have 3 days of fun at SM STORYLAND. Buy Ride-All-You-Can tickets at special prices during the 3-DAY SALE only.

Raffle draw hours on September 2 are as follows:

• SM Supercenter Pasig	11 pm
• SM Southmall Las Piñas	10:15 pm
• SM City San Lazaro	10 pm

SM SOUTHMALL LAS PIÑAS

SM City SAN LAZARO

SM SUPERCENTER PASIG

get a chance to

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INGRID Chua Go

PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO MAGAZINE BY DIX PEREZ

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

It's a 'bagcentric' era

Our grandmothers and mothers invested in jewelry. This generation is into bags

B*UMIGAY NA KAMI*!" MY WOMEN tennis mates were saying in between games over the weekend, their faces a painted mix of embarrassment, apology and thrill.

At first I didn't get it—succumbing to which cardinal sin? Then one fished out a piece of paper from her bag, a printout of LV Speedy 30. It turned

IT'S A 'BAGCENTRIC'/ D4

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but perfect for
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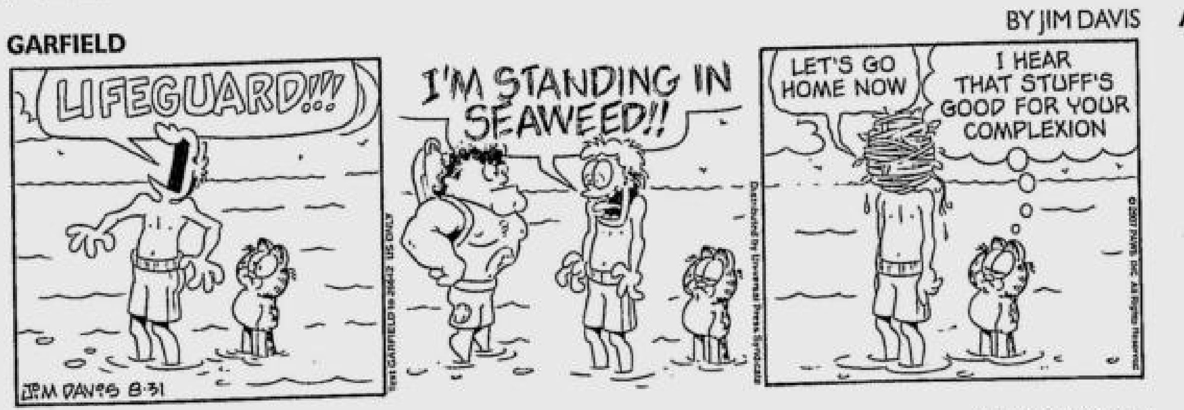
Greenbelt Katipunan Magallanes · Corinthian Hills
Banawa, Cebu · Ayala Center, Cebu

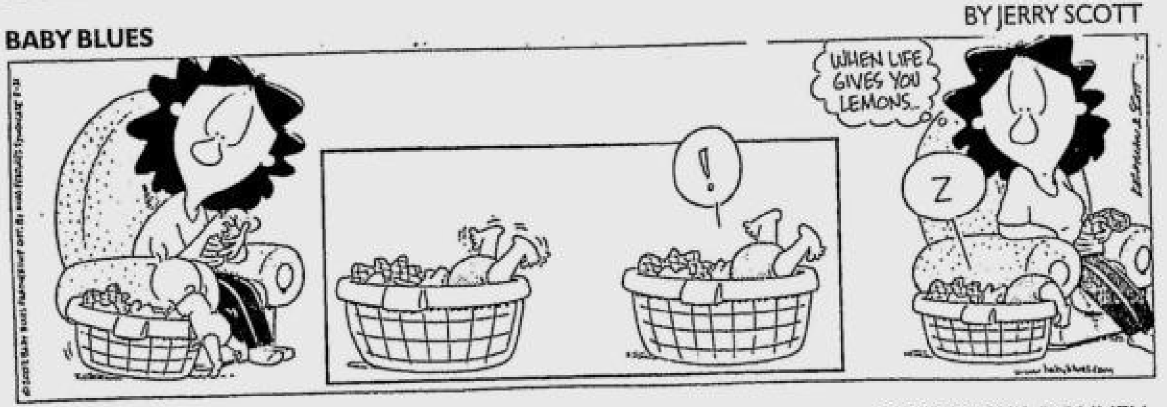
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


LIFEGUARD!!!
I'M STANDING IN SEAWEED!!
LET'S GO HOME NOW
I HEAR THAT STUFF'S GOOD FOR YOUR COMPLEXION
JIM DAVIS 8-31

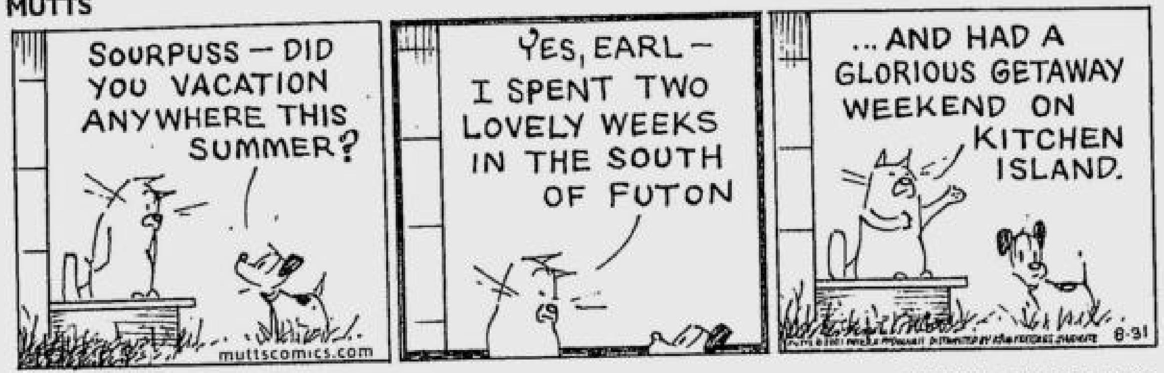
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


!
WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS...
Z

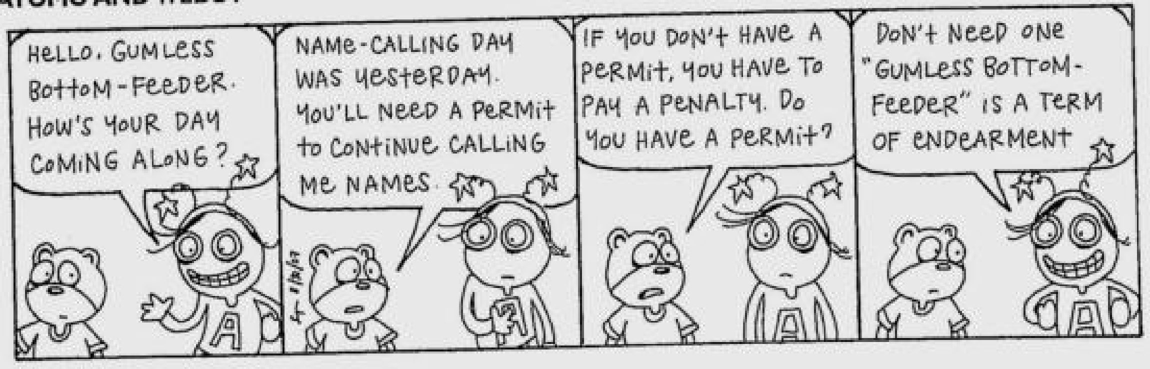
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SOURPUSS — DID YOU VACATION ANYWHERE THIS SUMMER?
YES, EARL — I SPENT TWO LOVELY WEEKS IN THE SOUTH OF FUTON
... AND HAD A GLORIOUS GETAWAY WEEKEND ON KITCHEN ISLAND.
muttscomics.com
8-31

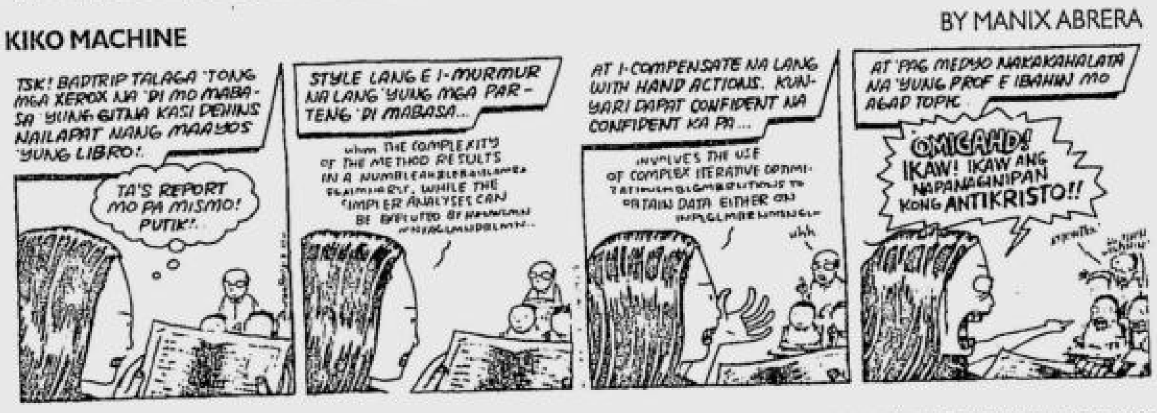
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HELLO, GUMLESS BOTTOM-FEEDER. HOW'S YOUR DAY COMING ALONG?
NAME-CALLING DAY WAS YESTERDAY. YOU'LL NEED A PERMIT TO CONTINUE CALLING ME NAMES.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE A PERMIT, YOU HAVE TO PAY A PENALTY. DO YOU HAVE A PERMIT?
DON'T NEED ONE "GUMLESS BOTTOM-FEEDER" IS A TERM OF ENDEARMENT

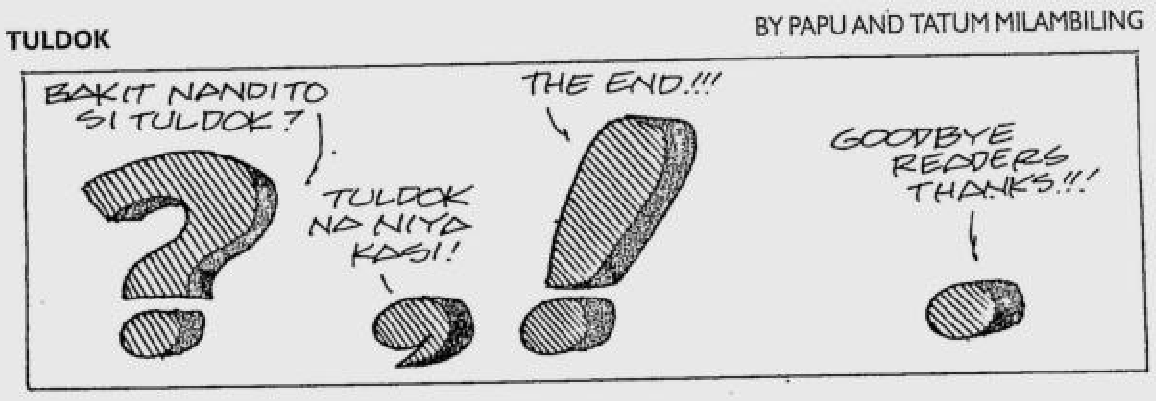
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK! BADTRIP TALAGA 'TONG MGA XEROX NA 'DI MO MABASA 'YUNG GITNA KASI DEHINS NAILAPAT NANG MAAYOS 'YUNG LIBRO!.
TA'S REPORT MO PA MISMO! PUTIK!.
STYLE LANG E I-MURMUR NA LANG 'YUNG MGA PARTENG 'DI MABASA...
AT I-COMPENSATE NA LANG WITH HAND ACTIONS. KUNYARI DAPAT CONFIDENT NA CONFIDENT KA PA...
INVOLVES THE USE OF COMPLEX ITERATIVE OPTIMI-
uhh
AT 'PAG MEDYO NAKAKAHALATA NA 'YUNG PROF E IBAHIN MO AGAD TOPIC.
OMIGAHD! IKAW! IKAW ANG NAPANAGINIPAN KONG ANTIKRISTO!!

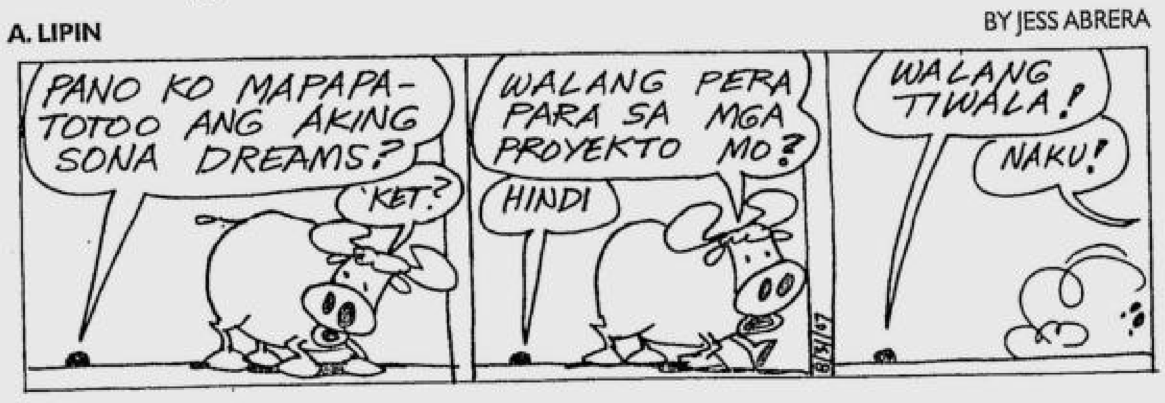
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BAKIT NANDITO SI TULDOK?
TULDOK NA NIYA KASI!
THE END!!!
GOODBYE READERS THANKS!!!

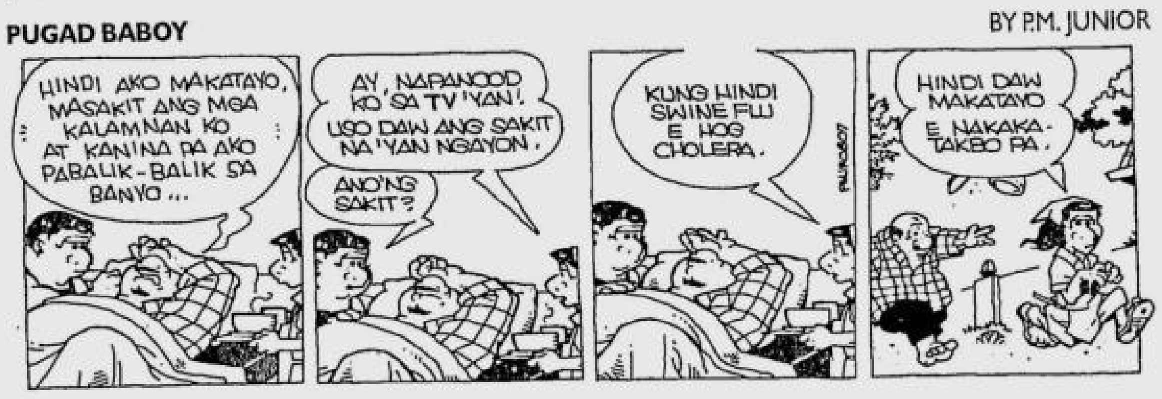
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PANO KO MAPAPATOTOO ANG AKING SONA DREAMS?
'KET?
WALANG PERA PARA SA MGA PROYEKTO MO?
HINDI
WALANG TIWALA!
NAKU!
8/31/07

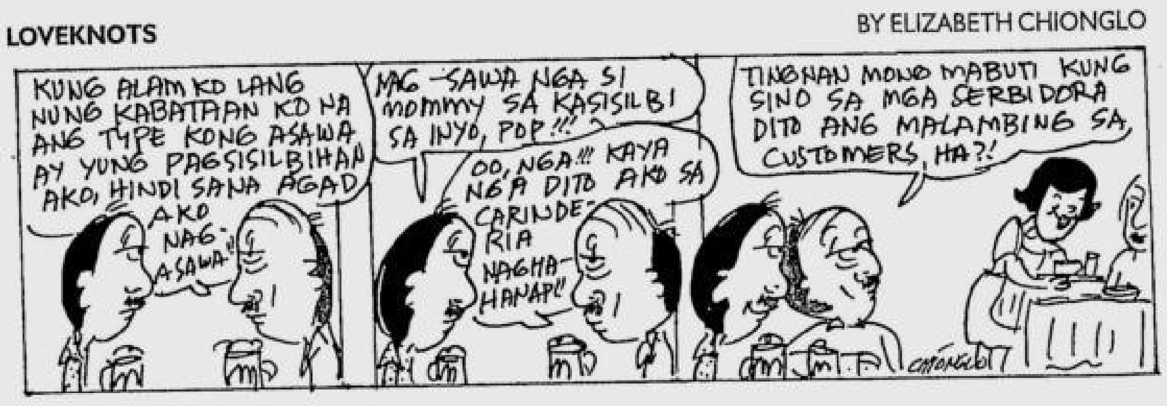
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HINDI AKO MAKATAYO, MASAKIT ANG MGA KALAMNAN KO AT KANINA PA AKO PABALIK-BALIK SA BANYO...
AY, NAPANOOD KO SA TV 'YAN'. USO DAW ANG SAKIT NA 'YAN NGAYON.
ANO'NG SAKIT?
KUNG HINDI SWINE FLU E HOG CHOLERA.
HINDI DAW MAKATAYO E NAKAKA-TAKBO PA.

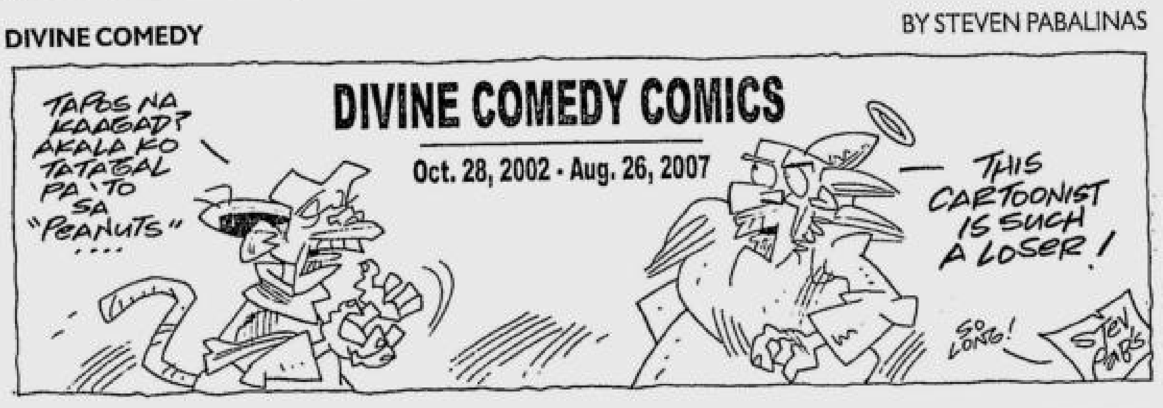
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


KUNG ALAM KO LANG NUNG KABATAAN KO NA ANG TYPE KONG ASAWA AY YUNG PAGSISILBIHAN AKO, HINDI SANA AGAD
AKO NAG-ASAWA!!
NAG-SAWA NGA SI MOMMY SA KASISILBI SA INYO, POP!!!
OO, NGA!!! KAYA NGA DITO AKO SA CARINDERIA NAGHAHANAP!!
TINGNAN MONG MABUTI KUNG SINO SA MGA SERBIDORA DITO ANG MALAMBING SA CUSTOMERS, HA?!
CHIONGLO

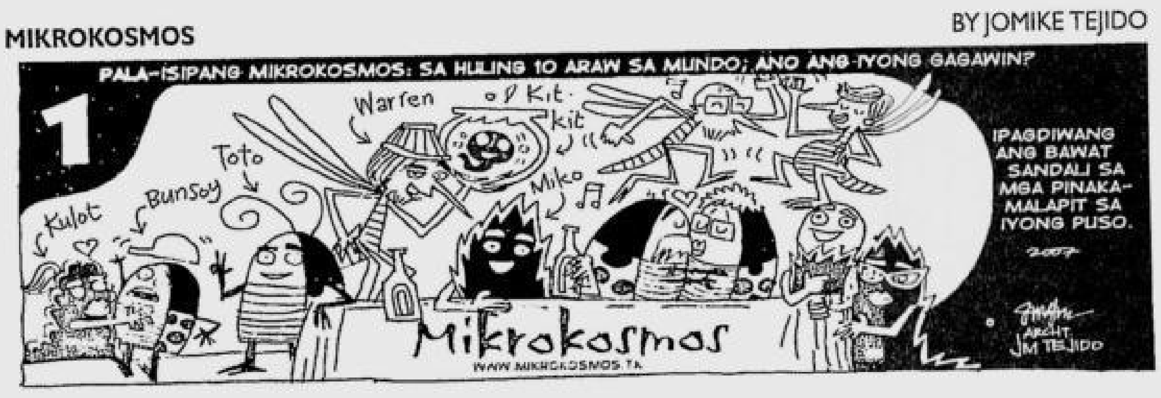
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DIVINE COMEDY COMICS
Oct. 28, 2002 - Aug. 26, 2007
TAPOS NA KAAGAD? AKALA KO TATAGAL PA 'TO SA "PEANUTS"....
THIS CARTOONIST IS SUCH A LOSER!
SO LONG!
STEV PABS

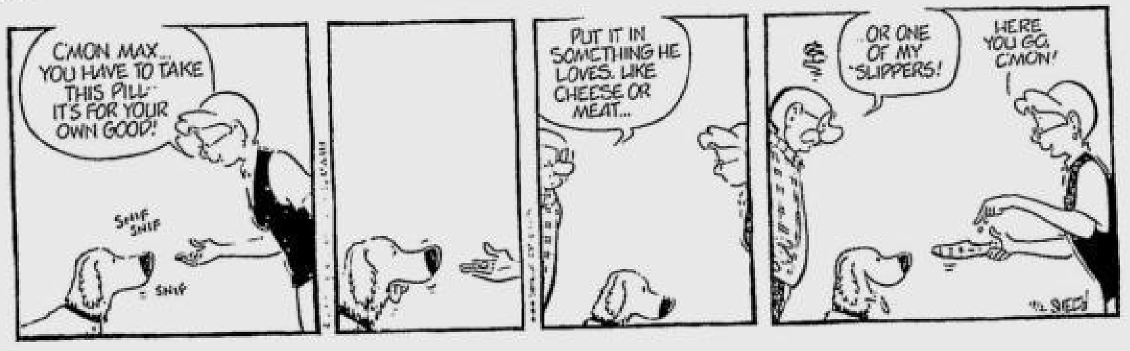
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PALA-ISIPANG MIKROKOSMOS: SA HULING 10 ARAW SA MUNDO; ANO ANG IYONG GAGAWIN?
1
Warren
Kit
kit
Toto
Bunsoy
Kulot
Miko
IPAGDIWANG ANG BAWAT SANDALI SA MGA PINAKA-MALAPIT SA IYONG PUSO.
2007
ARCHT. JM TEJIDO
Mikrokosmos
WWW.MIKROKOSMOS.TK

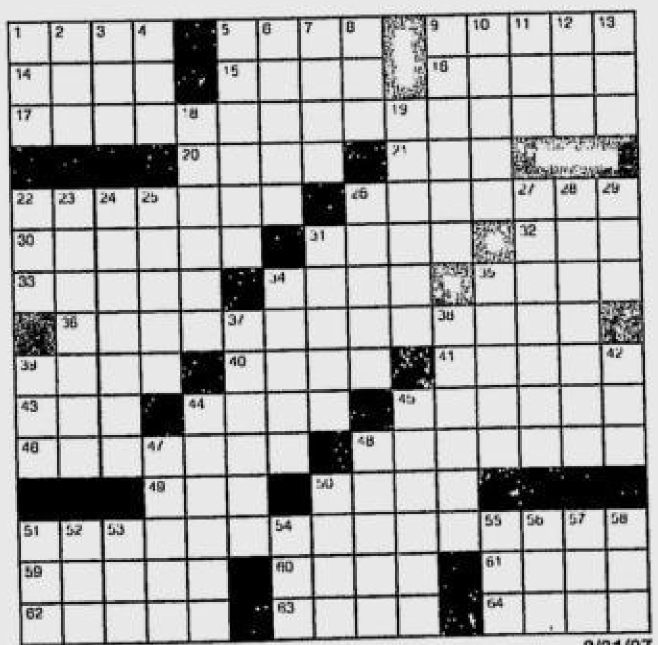
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


C'MON MAX... YOU HAVE TO TAKE THIS PILL... IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!
SNIF SNIF
SNIF
PUT IT IN SOMETHING HE LOVES. LIKE CHEESE OR MEAT...
...OR ONE OF MY SLIPPERS!
HERE YOU GO. C'MON!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Trade
5 Think ahead
9 Fourth estate
14 Diamond Head's site
15 Declaim wildly
16 Tijuana ta-ta
17 Finished
20 Spike and Lighthorse Harry
21 Bring legal action
22 Biceps adornment
26 Come to grips
30 Gets word
31 Objective
32 Hoop feature
33 Kind of committee
34 Positive
35 Photos
36 Departed
39 Give the glory
40 Insect colony
41 Fashion silhouette
43 Suited for
44 Professional charges
45 Form a wrinkle
46 Air of hopelessness
48 Animal trainer
49 Need a nurse
50 Apple center
51 Focused on the future
59 Shaq's surname
60 Musical work
61 Burn balm
62 Very small
63 Clothes lines?
64 Dial up



8/31/07

By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

DOWN
1 Place seeds
2 Children's card game
3 Cry of triumph
4 Seal baby
5 Gussies up
6 Filled the cargo hold
7 Carpenters and leaf-cutters
8 High degree
9 Former dictator Noriega
10 Periphery
11 Hurl an insult at
12 Chit letters
13 Poisonous snake
18 Quantum theory developer Max
19 Jerusalem's location
22 Miss. neighbor
23 Bureaucratic obstructions
24 Elephant keepers
25 Be moody
26 Pessimistic expectation
27 Picayune
28 Legal permit
29 Printer's measures
31 Dead reckoning
34 Smile of contempt
35 Blanched
37 Tip or Eugene
38 Part of ERA
39 Young fellow
42 Auction finish?
44 Without bias
45 Tender stroke
47 Hymn of praise
48 Balderdash
50 Manage to deal (with)
51 NIMBY part
52 Wind dir.
53 Victory letter
54 Cry of delight
55 Exclude
56 "Float like a butterfly" boxer
57 Swindle
58 Large container

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

B	A	C	H	■	N	O	A	M	■	C	A	P	R	I
A	C	R	E	■	U	L	N	A	■	A	L	I	E	N
S	H	O	E	■	C	L	O	G	■	R	A	N	G	E
H	E	W	H	O	L	A	U	G	H	S	■	Z	A	P
■	■	■	A	V	E	■	K	I	T	■	H	A	L	T
W	I	N	W	O	O	D	■	E	S	S	O	■	■	■
I	R	T	■	I	L	I	E	■	■	H	O	I	S	T
L	A	S	T	D	I	D	N	T	G	E	T	T	H	E
D	E	B	R	A	■	■	G	A	R	R	■	C	E	E
■	■	■	E	L	E	A	■	G	E	I	S	H	A	S
L	O	O	S	■	G	S	A	■	A	F	T	■	■	■
A	P	T	■	J	O	K	E	A	T	F	I	R	S	T
N	E	H	R	U	■	F	I	L	E	■	G	A	L	A
D	R	E	A	D	■	O	O	P	S	■	M	I	E	N
S	A	R	G	E	■	R	U	S	T	■	A	D	D	S

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8/31/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You can be social, gregarious and charming, and in the next moment, a hard-nosed analyst who has the ability to examine many different details. You use logic to make important decisions. You appreciate beautiful things, and you enjoy luxury. You're creative at both business and pleasure. In the year ahead, you will likely have to make an important choice. Choose wisely.

Birthdate of: Van Morrison, vocalist; Sara Ramirez, actress; Scott Niedermayer, hockey player.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be open to ideas about how to improve your education or your attitudes about politics, religion or other philosophical topics. You might learn something new about another culture today

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Research in almost any direction could really pay off for you today. Expect to discover a juicy secret! (But don't tell.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Discussions with a female friend might help you today. Someone could give you advice on how to improve your relations with others or with groups. in particular.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): People in power might see you in a new light today. Suddenly, they're aware of skills and potentials they never saw before. (This could help you a lot.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You'll meet someone powerful today. Quite likely, this person is from a different background or different culture from yours. Consider this an opportunity to learn something helpful and new

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You have a practical mind. Today you see new uses for existing things. These new applications might really improve something for you—who knows?

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): A heart-to-heart discussion with a partner or close friend can come up with better solutions and results today. Be open to what others say. You might be able to build a better mousetrap.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Don't hesitate to suggest improvements or reforms where you work today. Alternatively, you also might be able similarly to improve your own health.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Some of you are in a position to help young people or children today. Since kindness is the most important thing, what a wonderful opportunity for you!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Look around you to see where you can make improvements to your home or where you live today. Get rid of what you don't need. Tidy things up, and reduce the clutter!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Conversations with neighbors, siblings and relatives are quite intense today. You're not concerned with surface chitchat. You want to get down to the nitty-gritty truth of something

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): New sources or new ways of earning money are possibly at hand today. Stay alert for this. (It's always nice to have a little something on the side.)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

	9							
			4		7	5		2
	4	6	3			8		
	5					1	9	
				8				
	6	7					2	
		3			6	4	5	
6		4	7		2			
							8	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

8/31

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	4	2	8	5	3	1	7	6
5	7	6	9	1	2	8	3	4
3	1	8	6	4	7	9	5	2
8	9	4	7	3	6	2	1	5
2	3	1	5	9	8	6	4	7
7	6	5	1	2	4	3	9	8
1	2	7	3	8	5	4	6	9
4	5	3	2	6	9	7	8	1
6	8	9	4	7	1	5	2	3

Difficulty Level ★★★

GOINGS ON

Bar tour for mag's 1st year

ANTHEM MAGAZINE CELEBRATES ITS FIRST anniversary in September by presenting live performances by the nation's hottest bands Thursday nights. The weekly bar tour kicks off Sept. 6 at Clubdredd, Eastwood, with Bandwagon-Up Dharma Down, Radioactive Sago Project, UrbanDub, Picturefilled, Stonefree, Rocksteddy, Kapatid, Greyhounds, The Spaceflower Show, Chicosci, The Ambassadors, Sinosikat? and Hardboiled Eggs. The rest of the bar-tour itinerary is: Sept. 13, Saguijo Bar, Guijo St., Makati City; Sept. 20 Mag:Net Café, Bonifacio High Street, Makati City; and Sept. 27, Route 196, Katipunan Extension.

DANCE PERFORMANCE. University of the Philippines Los Baños presents "Field: Land Is the Belly of Man." The Samahan sa Sining (Department of Humanities) will host two performances on Sept. 4-5. The dance performance pays tribute to the country's disappearing rice-growing traditions. It is also an appeal for preservation of a cultural heritage, two millennia of agricultural knowledge, and historical and sacred customs. "Field" is choreographed and performed by Filipino-Canadian choreographer Alvin Erasga Tolentino. The multimedia solo performance uses contemporary dance, music and the video art of Tad Ermitaño.

CONCERT. Switchfoot, an alternative rock act, is holding a concert Sept. 10, 7:30 p.m., at Cuneta Astrodome for the benefit of the International Justice Mission. IJM is a nonprofit Christian worldwide human-rights organization that rescues victims of violence, sexual exploitation, slavery and oppression. Since it began 10 years ago, the band whose music ranges from gospel rock to synth-influenced sound, has supported advocacy groups like One Campaign, Invisible Children, Keep a Breast Foundation and To Write Love on Her Arms.

GRANDPARENTS' DAY. Robinsons Malls celebrates Grandparents' Day on Sept. 9, with free health services, a health-awareness seminar and exercise/instructional sessions which will be held at the mall's activity area, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. A dance competition, "Dancing Apolo & Apola," will also be held. Call 6836782, 683100 local 780 or 137.

PRE-CHRISTMAS BAZAAR. The Crescent Moon ceramic and restaurant compound in Antipolo is the venue of The First of September Antipolo Bazaar Sept. 1, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. A brainchild of ceramics artist/entrepreneur/potter Lanelle Abueva Fernando, the annual event offers works by various craftsmen for early Christmas shoppers looking for personal gifts or corporate giveaways. Featured items include products by Wendy Fernando Regalado, Le Fort Christmas décor, Gia's Bags, and Lanelle's ceramic stoneware pieces. Homemade lunch will be served at P300 per person. A road map will be faxed to interested parties (tel. 6305854).

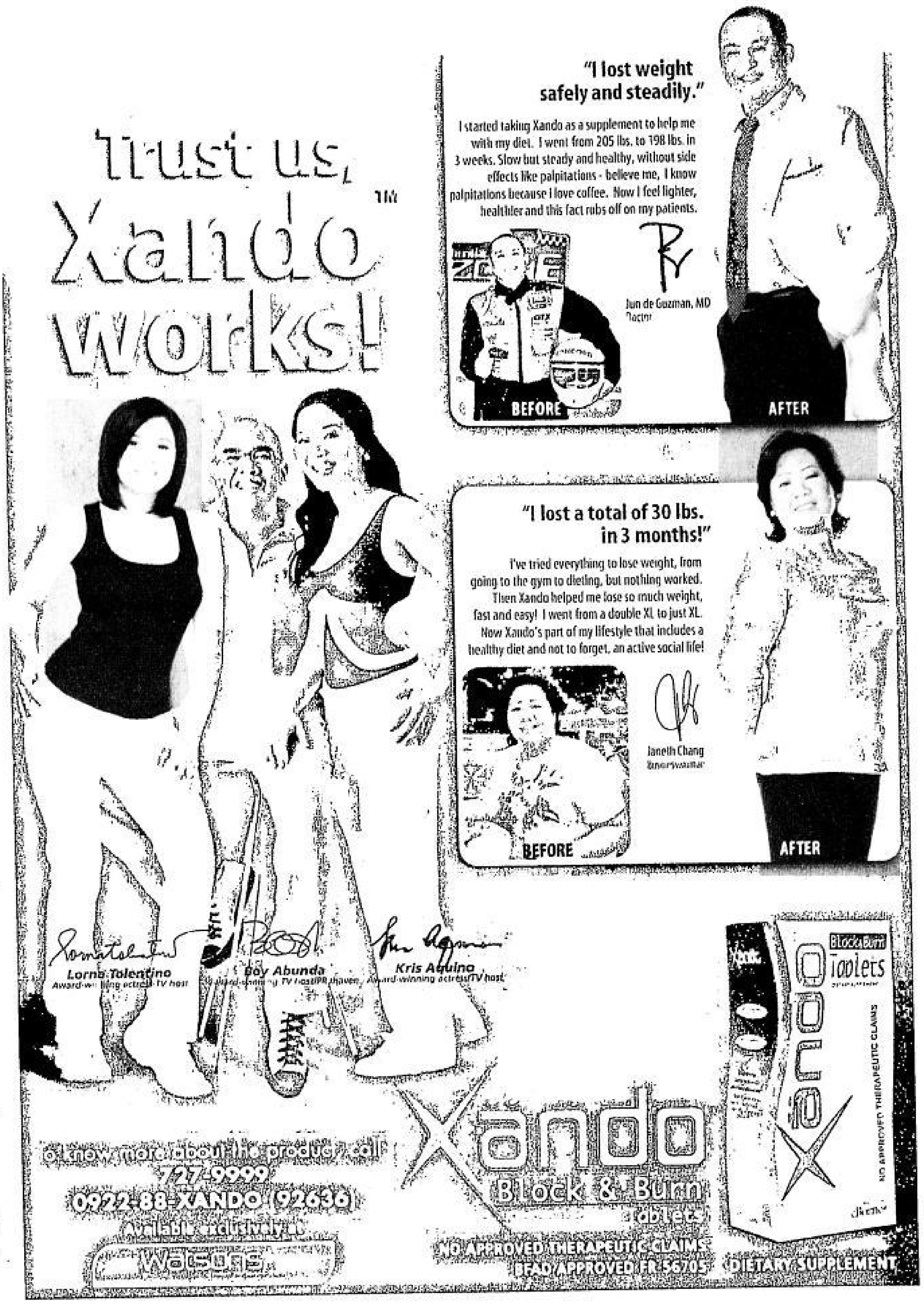
ANNIVERSARY. Asian Social Institute celebrates its 45th foundation anniversary with "Music, Magic and Lugaw" Sept. 8 at Makati Skyline, World Trade Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 8154938, 8156925 and 5233483.

GRAD EXHIBIT. The Philippine School of Interior Design (PSID) Advanced Class of 2007 will mount graduation exhibit "Forty, Filipino and Fabulous (F3)" Sept. 29-Oct. 21 at Paseo Center, Paseo de Roxas corner Sedeno St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. The exhibit will showcase Philippine furniture pieces.

BINGO RAMA. The Philippine Malabon Cultural Institute (PMCI) will hold Bingo Rama on Sept. 9, 1 p.m., at the PMCI Grounds, Longos, Malabon. Proceeds will go to PMCI Alumni Association projects. Call 2824793, 3513388, or 0917-6456295.

SEMINAR. The Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation Inc. will hold a photo seminar Sept. 8, 15 and 22 at Room 302-A, Femii Bldg., A. Soriano Ave., Intramuros, Manila. Call 5247576 or 5280371.

POSTGRADUATE COURSE. The Department of Pediatrics, Philippine General Hospital, University of the Philippines and CHILD Foundation Inc. will hold its 2007 postgraduate course "Subspecialty Alerts in General Pediatrics" on Sept. 12-13 at Century Park Hotel. The course aims to give pediatricians and general practitioners basic management skills for childhood diseases. Call 5240892 or 5218450 locals 2101 or 2107.


Trust us, Xando works!™

"I lost weight safely and steadily."
I started taking Xando as a supplement to help me with my diet. I went from 205 lbs. to 198 lbs. in 3 weeks. Slow but steady and healthy, without side effects like palpitations - believe me, I know palpitations because I love coffee. Now I feel lighter, healthier and this fact rubs off on my patients.
Jun de Guzman, MD
Doctor
BEFORE
AFTER

"I lost a total of 30 lbs. in 3 months!"
I've tried everything to lose weight, from going to the gym to dieting, but nothing worked. Then Xando helped me lose so much weight, fast and easy! I went from a double XL to just XL. Now Xando's part of my lifestyle that includes a healthy diet and not to forget, an active social life!
Janeth Chang
Businesswoman
BEFORE
AFTER

Lorna Tolentino
Award-winning actress/TV host
Boy Abunda
Award-winning TV host/PR maven
Kris Aquino
Award-winning actress/TV host

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NO APPROVED THERAPEUTIC CLAIMS
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DIETARY SUPPLEMENT

It's time to avoid Trans Fat!
It's time to get healthy! It's time to be aware that some of the most common food you eat have something very bad for you: Trans Fat.

What is Trans Fat?
There are four kinds of fats: monounsaturated fat, polyunsaturated fat, saturated fat, and Trans Fat. Monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat are the "good" fats. Saturated fat is the "bad" fat people have long been warned to avoid. Trans Fat however is the worst kind of fat.

Proven Unhealthy
From the World Health Organization to the U.S. Food and Drug Authority, there have been many recent warnings about the health problems Trans Fat can cause. In an article published in the New England Journal of Medicine on April 13, 2006, the researchers detail evidence linking Trans Fat consumption to increased risk of coronary heart disease, sudden cardiac death, and diabetes. Trans Fat from partially hydrogenated oils have harmful effects on blood lipids, promote inflammation, and cause blood-vessel abnormalities, all of which are risk factors for heart disease.

Common Foods with Trans Fat
The majority of Trans Fat can be found in cookies, crackers, snack foods, fried fast food, doughnuts, pastries, baked goods, and other processed foods made with or fried in partially hydrogenated oils.

Try to avoid Trans Fat as much as you can. Read the labels of the packaged food you buy. Look at the ingredient list. Don't eat any product which has the words "partially hydrogenated" or "shortening" on the ingredient list.

Go for Zero Trans Fat
Look for products that say they are "Zero Trans Fat", like Nagaraya Cracker Nuts. Unlike other snack foods that are fried in partially hydrogenated fat, Nagaraya is roasted. This longtime favorite snack guarantees only crunchy goodness and nutrition...with none of the bad Trans Fat.

Time to go for Zero Trans Fat & Zero Cholesterol.
NAGARAYA

Manly timepieces for feminine chic

ALL-BLACK ion-plated stainless-steel case with bracelet is the signature look of Navy watch by Police.

ANNE CURTIS TRIES TO FIT HER outfits with her watch. And she gets her watches from Watch Republic.

Curtis said she especially loves the collection of Police with its daring designs mixed with manly elements.

The Police's Navy watch has a unidirectional rotating bezel, chronograph, subdials, date display and alarm.

Meanwhile, the P Saratoga has a unique hexagonal case with multilink bracelet all in stainless steel.

The Matrix has a sleek and stylish look while the Side Avenue mixes leather and steel for a polished, power look.

Police watches are available exclusively at Watch Republic stores in Power Plant Mall, Mall of Asia, The Block at SM North Edsa, Market! Market!, SM Fairview, SM Cebu and SM Bacolod.

UNISEX Matrix watch by Police

It's a 'bagcentric' era

From page D1

out they've been surfing the Internet for the Louis Vuitton bag of their dreams, or rather of their budget, and now, in their prime age of 30s and 40s, have decided to treat themselves to one.

Why, I asked although I already knew the answer. "Brand talk" (namedropping brands, I mean) has been rather loud off the (tennis, of course) courts lately, with eyes wandering beyond those Adidas(es) into more luxury brands of bags and shades.

"I think I have reached the age when I deserve to treat myself to one," said my 40ish tennis partner.

Who am I to disagree? Having been in the lifestyle media business all this time, we have been instrumental in helping create that want in women, and even in men. The "It" bags. The "must-have" accessories. The "lust-for" shoes. Honestly you run out of grabbing heads.

So get yourself a good leather bag, a good design, so it's a good investment, I gave my unsolicited advice to my tennis mates. Then we ticked off the luxury brands that we learned resell well on the Net. Yes, it's an "investment!" is how women these days rationalize that pricey bag.

In truth, it is. There's a market for used or vintage Vuittons, Guccis, and the like.

Our mothers and grandmothers invested in jewelry which they passed down to their heirs. This generation invests in bags. Vogue's Anna Wintour called it a "bagcentric culture."

A bag is as big a style statement as clothes, if not bigger. "You can be in a little black dress, but with only a Bottega Veneta bag. That's big style already," Auggie Cordero told me some time ago, an advice (which I won't heed in this lifetime, by the way) that made you realize the style drift. Years before, Auggie advised his clientele to wear two-strand pearls with a twin set or a simple shirt, to bring an understated classy look. Before you know it, it's bags, not jewelry, that bring on the look.

"A bag is an instant status recognition," said Ingrid Chua Go, a "bag lady" if I ever saw one. As far as I know, Ingrid began the business of used vintage bags in Manila, in 2001, using the Net and text messaging to tell friends and associates about the used luxury bags she had on sale.

"For the price you pay, a bag is big; it's seen instantly and unmistakably, more than jewelry," she concurred our observation that women today prefer bags to jewelry.

Ingrid was a college student in San Francisco in 1993 when she set her mind on having a Chanel. "It must be the marketing, these magazines," she said about her interest in the bag. "I'd spend weekends walking around Union Square and you're tempted by all that."

Ingrid saved her three-month allowance, foregoing nights-out with friends if she had to spend, to be able to buy her Chanel. After she got married, her husband Patrick saw her clearing out her closet full of bags and wondered what she'd do with all that stuff. That was when she thought of selling bags online. Before long friends put up their bags for sale through Ingrid. Ingrid and two other partners now have Tresorie, a boutique of clothes, accessories and bags in Jupiter, Makati. She's also designing a hip, contemporary jewelry line called I. Benjamin. (If women go for jewelry at all, it must be sleek, hip, avant-gardish, even in-your-face design.)

Curiously, not even the knock-offs in Greenhills have discouraged women from buying the real one, if they have the budget for it. According to Ingrid, the good fakes can cost as much as a five-figure sum, not much different from the price of used bags.

There's no denying that this era's "bagcentrism" can go too far. The obsession with "It" bags has become a bit much since 2003 when Louis Vuitton's Takashi Murakami bags flew off the shelves so that at year's end it accounted for 10 percent of Louis Vuitton's total sales revenues. (That colorful LV with the smiley cherry blossom design was a collaboration between LV designer Marc Jacobs and Murakami—a casting coup for a brand that's long lorded it over in Japan.)

Then, there's the Hermes Birkin or the "Kelly" bag, so named because Princess Grace (Kelly, the actress; I must always complete the ID because I could be talking to a generation that hasn't even read about Lady Di) used it to cover her bulging tummy when she was pregnant and being mobbed by the '50s paparazzi. Little did Grace Kelly know that her neat squarish leather bag would turn into a style icon in the 21st century, long after her death.

I once had lunch with a lovely couple. I espied the wife's Birkin. I asked the man—one of the country's most successful businessmen—what drove him to such passion in business. Three words, he replied with a grin, throwing a fond look at his wife—"buy me that!"

Recently LV unveiled the patchwork bag which, as its name suggests, is composed of patches of LV bags. Using the limited-edition appeal, only 12 of such bags are available for sale—at $52,300.

That goes to show how the "It bag" phenomenon has spun out of a real woman's (you and me) lifestyle. Women love bags and shoes, but we're not into robbing banks. Besides, we have children to feed.

The more women work, the more they become independent and the more free to decide how to spend their money. This "It bag" phenomenon rose alongside women's rise in business, career and power. I work hard, I deserve it—that's how they think.

Besides, some treat it as investment. Use and resell.

Your wife is in an investment mode, I kidded the husband of my tennis partner. Oh yeah, he said, what stocks?

Men are always in denial mode.

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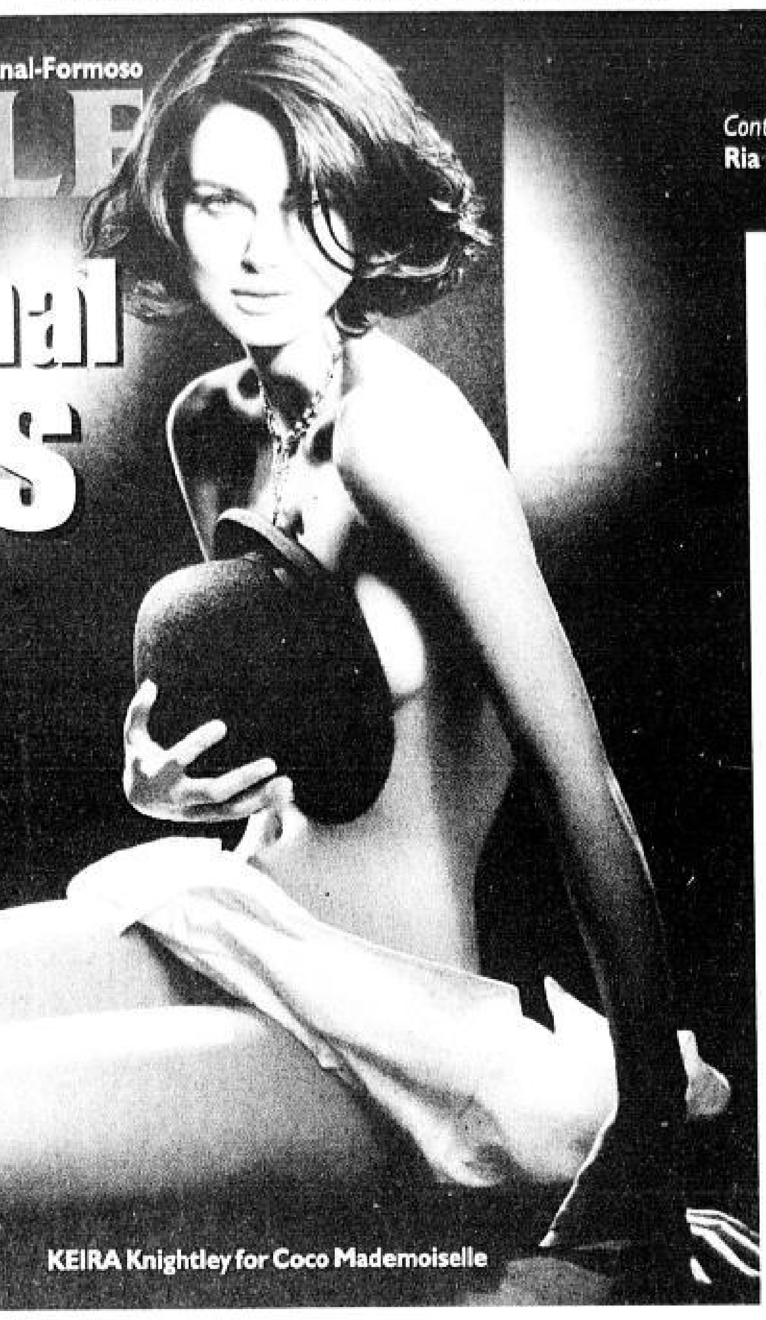
BEAUTY

Sensational scents

By Bianca Consunji
Contributor

DESPITE THE WIDE VARIETY of perfumes on the market, many women still have a difficult time choosing their signature scent, claiming that some perfumes are too sweet, flowery or musky. However, there's no denying that the perfumes out on the market now are definitely more unusual than the ones that our grandmothers wore decades ago. There are scents for women who prefer fresh, clean scents as well as for those who would

SENSATIONAL/ E2


KEIRA Knightley for Coco Mademoiselle

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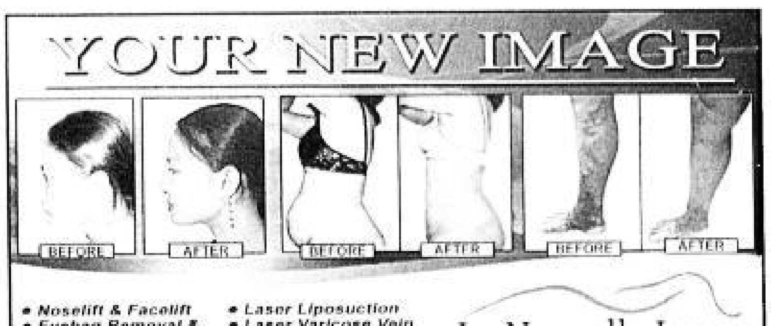

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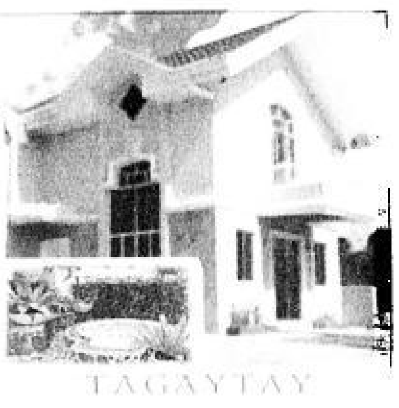

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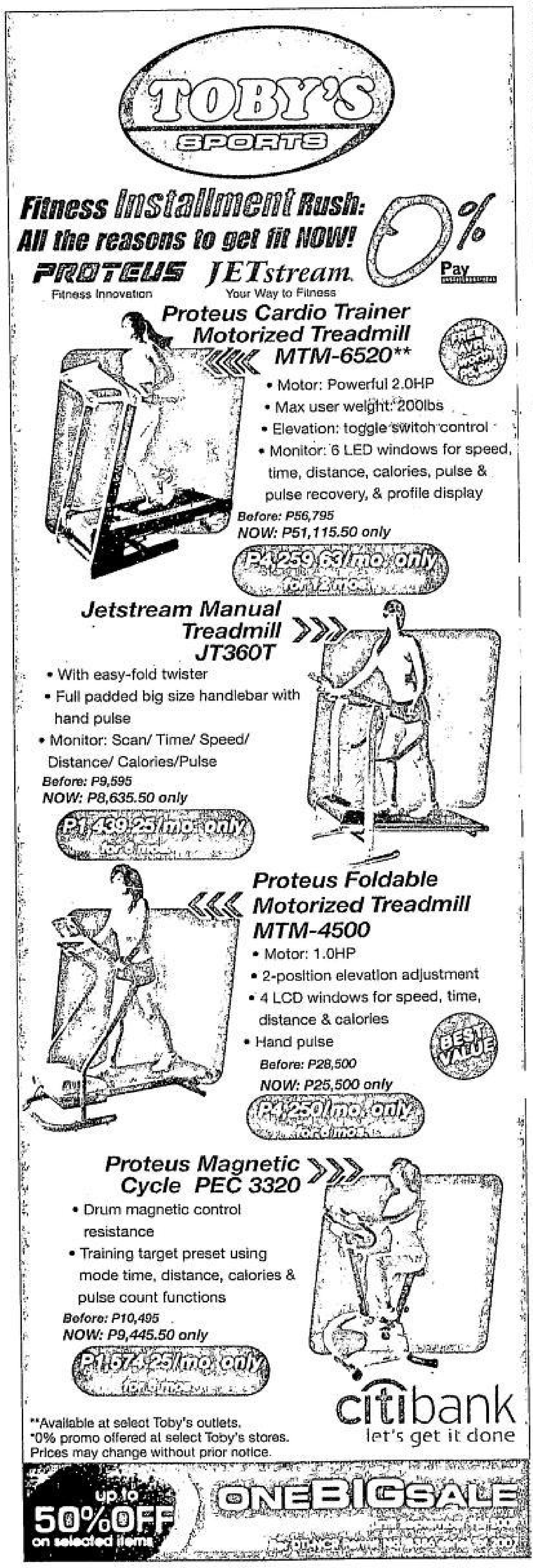
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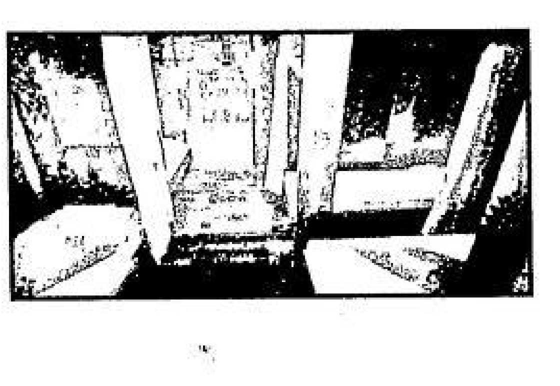

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Sensational scents

ANNICK Goutal's Eau d' Hadrien comes in a limited-edition Butterfly Bottle.

From page E1

rather stick to the classic musky perfumes.

Rustan's Department store recently relaunched two perfumes: Eau d' Hadrien by Annick Goutal, and Coco Mademoiselle by Chanel. Eau d' Hadrien, a fresh citrus-based cologne with notes of lemon, grapefruit, citron and cypress, is celebrating its 25th year as an iconic perfume with a new range of limited-edition products and packaging.

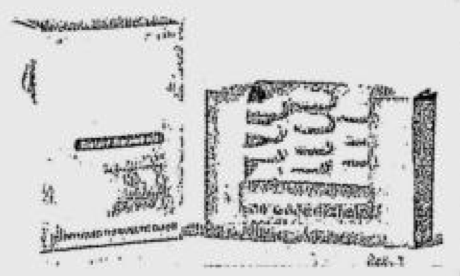
The limited-edition Eau d' Hadrien line contains seven key products: perfumed body cream, body scrub, body oil, body spray, conditioning shampoo, scented candle, and of course, the concentrated perfume version of the scent. To mark the anniversary of one of its most famous scents, Annick Goutal Paris commissioned artist Caroline Rennequin to hand-paint 1,000 bottles of Eau d' Hadrien. The bottles, considered to be collector's items, are painted with fruit-laden lemon trees and are topped with gilded gold butterflies.

Chanel, on the other hand, tapped Keira Knightley as the latest endorser of its Coco Mademoiselle perfume. The actress, who is best known for her roles in movies such as "Pride and Prejudice" and "Pirates of the Caribbean," was selected as the latest face of the Chanel perfume. She follows in the footsteps of actresses such as Catherine Deneuve and Nicole Kidman with the campaign, where she is depicted as a sultry, mysterious woman.

"I like fragrances with character," said Knightley in a statement to the press. "Coco Mademoiselle has character and temperament. It's a fresh, clean, delicate and subtle scent that isn't aggressive. It's young and modern. In that sense, the perfume matches me perfectly."

She continued, "Coco Mademoiselle is a fragrance that you can wear both in the day wearing jeans, or in the evening in an elegant dress. And that's definitely an advantage."

Coco Mademoiselle is described as a scent with top notes of citrus, followed by floral undertones. The notes blended into the scent include rose, oriental jasmine, vanilla bourbon, Indonesian patchouli and white musk. Aside from the traditional bottle of perfume, the scent is also available in a compact as solid perfume, and in a small decanter as purse perfume, which has a higher concentration than the usual bottled perfumes.



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'Magic' cream

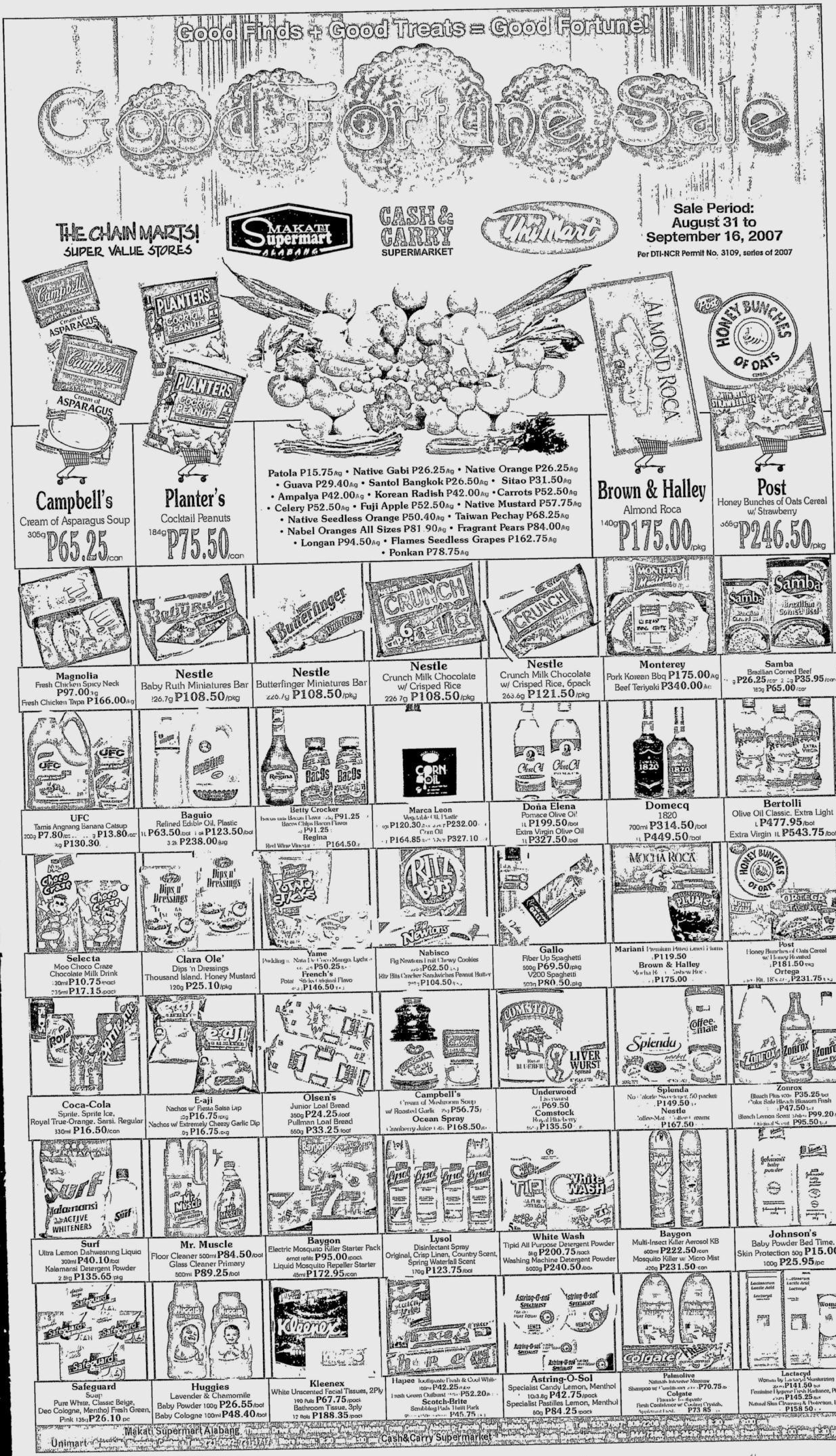
IT WAS IN THE ROYAL PALACE IN SAUDI Arabia where Teresita Perez-Villanueva had the chance to observe the royal family up close, and how the princesses would spend so much time for their beauty regimens. She noted that the princesses even concocted their own beauty creams using only the best raw materials, some of which were imported.

The experience inspired Villanueva, and with the help of a dermatologist friend formulated her own whitening beauty cream that she sold to fellow overseas Filipino workers. Eventually, members of the royal family were also trying her cream and were impressed with its effectiveness and high quality.

In 2004, Villanueva came home for good and formally launched Pervil Cosmetics Philippines, initially manufacturing her popular "Magic Cream" that continues to sell briskly nationwide. The company soon came up with other beauty products like cream soap and lotion that also became instant bestsellers.

The company's products are now available in the country's leading drugstores and supermarkets. More information about Pervil Cosmetics and Pervil Magic Cream are available at the company's website, www.pervil.com, or from their marketing office in Timog Avenue, Quezon City. For inquiries, call 3765044.

Be an Inquirer.



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Nestle
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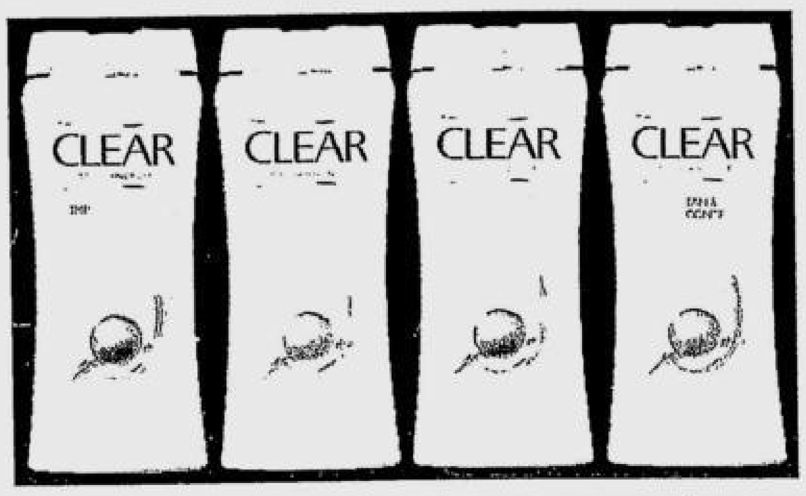
Men's anti-dandruff treatment also works well for women

Tests show that they not only control dandruff, they also check acne. So for good hair and good skin, go matey



MAKEOVER 911
Kinny Salas

LAST WEEK'S ARTICLE ON shampoo for oily hair has led several readers to remind me of my promised review for Clear Anti-Dandruff shampoo. Undoubtedly it's the most advertised shampoo on the market today; it seems wherever I turn or whatever local channel I switch to on TV or radio, there is some plug by Clear.

Of course, this beauty junkie is not immune to beauty-product hype and it led me to try out all the variants, some in mini and others in full size.

My profile: Sweaty girl who gets greasy fast despite intense cleansing and showers. My road-test result was not much of a surprise for me although it did scandalize my friends and female relatives.

The variant that best suited my needs and had the best performance level—Clear Anti-dandruff shampoo Men's Line in Activesport.

It is said that men sweat more and produce more oil so they actually need a different shampoo from women. Not in this case, apparently I really am more like my Dad than everyone thought in terms of physiology. I liked the cool tingly menthol feel, fresh scent and the way it dealt with my dandruff.

No odor

One major plus was there was no offensive odor whenever I sweat profusely. The three unisex variants and the other two men's line did not do as much for me so I ended up using them as shower gel or passed them on to my relatives and ecstatic household help.

For the greasy factor, I still got oily 20 hours after the shampoo, but there were no flakes on the strands. There was also a lot less falling hair because of the shampoo.

Grease control-wise, this is still a big deal because other dandruff shampoos only hold off grease for 12-16 hours for me.

Dandruff, by the way, also blocks hair follicle and is a contributing factor to hair loss so it is important to clear (no pun intended) the path for hair growth. I sometimes alternate with the Unisex line in Ice Cool as I really do love that cold scalp tingle after a sweaty exercise session.

There have also been inquiries on the necessity of using an anti-dandruff conditioner when you have oily scalp. Of course, those with normal to dry scalp should feel free to apply the conditioner from scalp to ends for additional anti-dandruff protection from the zinc vitanol.

How about those with normal to oily hair that tends to thin out? You, guys, will still benefit from using the Clear anti-dandruff conditioner. But apply it on strands up to the ends; avoid the scalp.

Anti-acne

One benefit from using an anti-dandruff conditioner for those with greasy hair is that it will help solve their acne problem on the shoulders, chest and back area as the treatment's zinc is one of the active ingredients in combating acne and in preventing/controlling skin breakouts. Regular conditioners that do not get rinsed off extra well clog up these areas, causing breakouts.

A lot of oral acne medicines contain zinc to speed up treatment so it makes sense that applying it topically will keep the breakouts under control. Be sure to rinse well anyway as heavy conditioner residue could still clog pores.

One trick which I discovered in my 20s was using anti-dandruff shampoo as shower gel for the back, shoulders and chest and leaving suds on for about a full minute or two, then rinsing it off.

Acne would flake off and flatten out before the week was done, leaving me with the slightest flat red or brown marks which I had to wait a little longer to fade. So even with my other shampoos that are not dandruff-related, now I use the Ice Cool or Hair Fall Defense conditioner.

There's no anti-dandruff conditioner from the men's variant by the way, so don't yank your hair out looking for them, all conditioners are from the unisex range.

If you still don't know where to buy Clear, you obviously don't do many errands because there are consultants and promo girls in every grocery, PCX, drugstore and department store beauty section I have been to in Metro Manila. Take advantage of those trial sachets they hand out.

Lesson learned: Sometimes a lady needs something labeled strong enough for a man to get the results she needs. It's nothing to be ashamed of as it's the performance that counts.

E-mail the author at kinnysalas@yahoo.com.

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LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

Contributing Editors
Apples Aberin-Sadhwani and Jenni Epperson

ON RAYA Mananquil: top and trousers by Lulu Tan Gan; On Trishan Cuaso: outfit by Randy Ortiz

ON PATTY Betita: gown by Rene Salud

Model citizens

Twenty years of PMAP

ON MARILEN Faustino: outfit by Joey Samson; On Den Abesamis: suit by Marden Iglesias

ON ARIEL Atendido: suit by Tonichi Nocom; on Gem Padilla: gown by Mike dela Rosa

By Jackie C. Aquino
Contributor

NINETEEN EIGHTY-SIX WAS THE YEAR that the Philippines changed forever. The voice and will of people power became the order of the day, as a peaceful revolution unfolded to unseat a dictator.

This was also the year that a group of fashion models felt that something had to be done to address the unfair and unprofessional working conditions of models in the local fashion industry.

Back then, models rehearsed for several days, and sometimes received a measly paycheck for their efforts. And because contracts were but of the verbal variety, unsavory characters could easily take advantage of the situation and the models' rights.

So, upon the suggestion of one fashion insider to form a "union" to protect their rights, around 20 of the country's top models joined forces to do something about their plight. A few months later (February 1987, to be exact), with the idealistic but heartfelt goal of professionalizing the industry by standardizing rates and working hours, and disciplining its ranks, the Professional Models Association of the Philippines (PMAP) was born, with Ronnie Asuncion as its first president.

The models, through PMAP, envisioned and worked toward their goal of building an "industry" that was and is fair and beneficial for all concerned-designers, retail brands, directors, producers, and yes, models, included.

Challenges

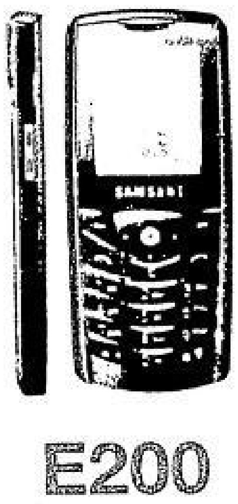
The association has had its fair share of challenges along the way. Its members have butted heads with powerful industry denizens to protect individual members, as well as the association's very existence. Good intentions and a united front served the association well, however, as it survived, and even flourished amid an ever-changing, even fickle and unforgiving industry that's replete with countless other models, not to mention, imports from all over the world.

Today, the association has thrived and continues to grow. Its members have individually become the country's top mannequins. As a group, they have paved the way for future generations in ensuring that they will have a voice in the wilderness that is the fashion industry.

On Sept. 5, all roads lead to the Peninsula Manila, as PMAP celebrates its 20th year anniversary with "20 years of PMAP," a fashion show that will include past and present members, plus 20 designers who've been a part of its rich history.

MODEL/ F2

ON RAYA Mananquil: dress by Joey Samson; on Marina Benipayo: outfit by Antonio Garcia; on Sanya Smith: dress by Avel Bacudio



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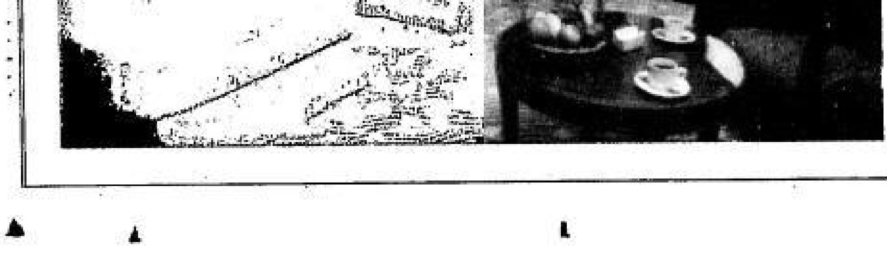

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GALLERIA MANILA

THE AUTHOR (far left) with the cast and crew (designers, stylists, makeup artists, photographer and PMAP models, included) of this INQUIRER Fashion photo shoot

Model citizens

From page F1

Personal triumph

On a personal note, having had the opportunity to witness PMAP in its 20 years of existence, I can't help but be amazed at how all its past members have moved on to conquer new fields.

It's a personal triumph to see the people I grew up with in the industry now lead productive and meaningful lives. Another source of pride is that some of its original founders have remained active in the industry either as models, designers or stylists; a true testament to the ability of some to last as long as the association has been around.

Suyene Chi-Sia and Izza Gonzales-Agana, now boutique owners, are still in demand for runway shows; Tina Maristela-Ocampo sells her bags in New York, designer Antonio Garcia has the distinction of showing his collection in New York Fashion Week, 7th on 6th while Maribel Lastimosa-Steinmann resides in Orange County and is a leading philanthropist in her community.

Jack de Mesa owns a modeling agency while Eric Quizon is now a renowned filmmaker. Ronnie Asuncion is a sugar trader, JB Abesamis (the second president) is a successful doctor and is married to Miss Universe 3rd runner-up Desiree Verdadero while Tetta Ortiz-Matera is a restaurateur. From the original 30 something members, the association has had over 150 members over the years.

The second batch produced three remarkable women, who today are major forces in the industry: Myrza Sison, the editor in chief of Marie Claire; Apples Aberin-Sadhwani (the fifth president) is now a fashion editor of the Philippine Daily Inquirer; and Tweetie de Leon-Gonzalez (third president), who I feel is the most successful model of her generation, still commands the attention of all major brands. These women definitely put that old saying of models being airheads to rest. Another notable batch mate is Denden Abesamis (fourth president) who worked for major retail houses in New York.

Tallest

Batch 3 produced the tallest members on record (5'10" being the average height), who all won beauty and modeling titles to add to their resumes. Sara Jane Paez-Santiago, Abbygale Arenas-de Leon and Gem Padilla competed in the Miss Universe contest; Marilen Espino-Mendoza, Marina Benipayo and Cara Subijano went to Miss World; Patty Betita and Thea Robles were part of Miss International; Lala Flores-Magpantay competed in Supermodel. For Elite's Look of the Year, the Philippines sent Anne Torres-Bichelmeir, Patricia dela Cruz-Virvescu and Lou Bunyi-Pareja; and Mellany Carlos took part in Miss Wonderland-International. Other batchmates include actor John Estrada and singer Calvin Millado.

Batch 4 includes two presidents, Grace Molina and Baba Parma (presidents #6 and #7, respectively). The world of TV became the calling for Hans Montenegro, Wilma Doesnt, Marc Nelson, Joey Mead and Phoemela Barranda. Rachel Soriano and Lalaine Edson also had the honor of representing our country in beauty pageants abroad.

Like their predecessors before them, Batch 5 boasts of having the current top models of the country today. With Rissa Mananquil-Samson as president, they continue to break barriers as they continue to uphold the PMAP standard. The list includes Isabel Roces, Grace Tagle-Arigo, Raya Mananquil, Bianca Valerio, Ornusa Cadness, Brent Javier, Luke Jickain, Robby Mananquil, Mikee Carrion and Gary Dulatas, among others.

These model citizens have soared to new heights and conquered new markets, thereby serving as inspiration to other models pursuing the same dreams.

And for all that, I laud them and celebrate their accomplishments! Here's to another 20 years of memories, laughter, tears and triumphs!

"Twenty Years of PMAP" is presented by Samsung in cooperation with the Peninsula Manila and Rustan's Essenses, with the support of Metrobank Femme Visa, Bench, Belo Medical Group, Moët & Chandon Champagne, Hennessy Cognac, Absolut Vodka, Jim Beam, Yellow Tail wine and Fiamma.

FROM LEFT, on Phoemela Barranda: dress by Rhett Eala; On Rissa Samson: dress by Dennis Lustico; On Angel Agustine, dress by Jojie Lloren

ON GEM Padilla: gown by Mike dela Rosa; On Marina Benipayo: dress and coat by Antonio Garcia; On Patty Betita: gown by Rene Salud

ON ABBY Arenas-de Leon, black gown by Frederick Peralta

Photography Mark Nicdao
Styling Izza Gonzales-Agana, Bianca Valerio, Mikee Carreon, Ton Lao
Makeup Abby Arena-de Leon, Baba Parma, Lou Bunyi/Emphasis Salon, Bubbles Paraiso
Hair Mae Jago, Cris Legarde, Ruth Malto/Emphasis Salon, The Peninsula Manila (8123456, 8437629)
Edgar Miralles, AileenCoyukiat/ Academy of Beauty and Arts (8908197)
Shot on location at The Peninsula Manila
Thanks to Mariano Garchitorena, Marge Olives and Lourd Ramos

FROM LEFT, on Peter Nordelle: outfit by Gerry Katigbak; On Tweetie de Leon-Gonzalez: dress by Auggie Cordero; On Dindi de Leon: dress by Ivarluski Aseron; on Sanya Smith: dress by Avel Bacudio; on Den Abesamis: outfit by Marden Iglesias; on Marilen Faustino: gown by Rajo Laurel; on Raya Mananquil: dress by Joey Samson; on Ariel Atendido: outfit by Tonichi Nocom; on Girlie Benitez: gown by Patrice Ramos-Diaz; on Rafael Kiefer: outifit by Vic Barba

Don't hate me, envy me

Fashion currency

Think rich, wear rich!

From page F4

getically proclaiming messages such as "Filthy Rich," "Big Spender" and "Don't Hate Me, Envy Me." (I can already hear the keyboard sounds from bloggers everywhere… whatever!)

The T-shirts are a gallery of beautiful designs, which transform the ordinary T-shirt into a work of art. The collection took inspiration from many elements of strikingly commercial yet unique designs that suggest luxury and extravagance.

Designs are rendered in various printing styles that give the shirts their expensive look. Photographic art techniques are complemented with colored metallic foil embellishments. Photocopy-style illustrations and altered images are mixed with the amusing, in-your-face statements that catch your eye (and your complete attention). They may admittedly be a little too bold in the beginning, but, like the designer himself, they certainly grow on you!

Now here's the real secret. I believe the bigger statement in all this is Tim's generosity, which is nothing short of legendary. The irrepressible Tim is, in fact, helping his favorite charity with his new show, GMA 7's "Celebrity Duets." Part of his prize money of P1M will go to the Red Cross if he wins. (To vote: Text Duets Tim and send to 2344 for Globe, Sun and TM, 367 Smart and Talk N' Text.) So he's not just wearing it on his sleeve!

The Theme:Yap limited graphic T-shirts are made of comfy (the type you want to sleep in) cotton jersey but cut in slim silhouettes that come in aqua, beige, green, navy, orange, purple and pink.

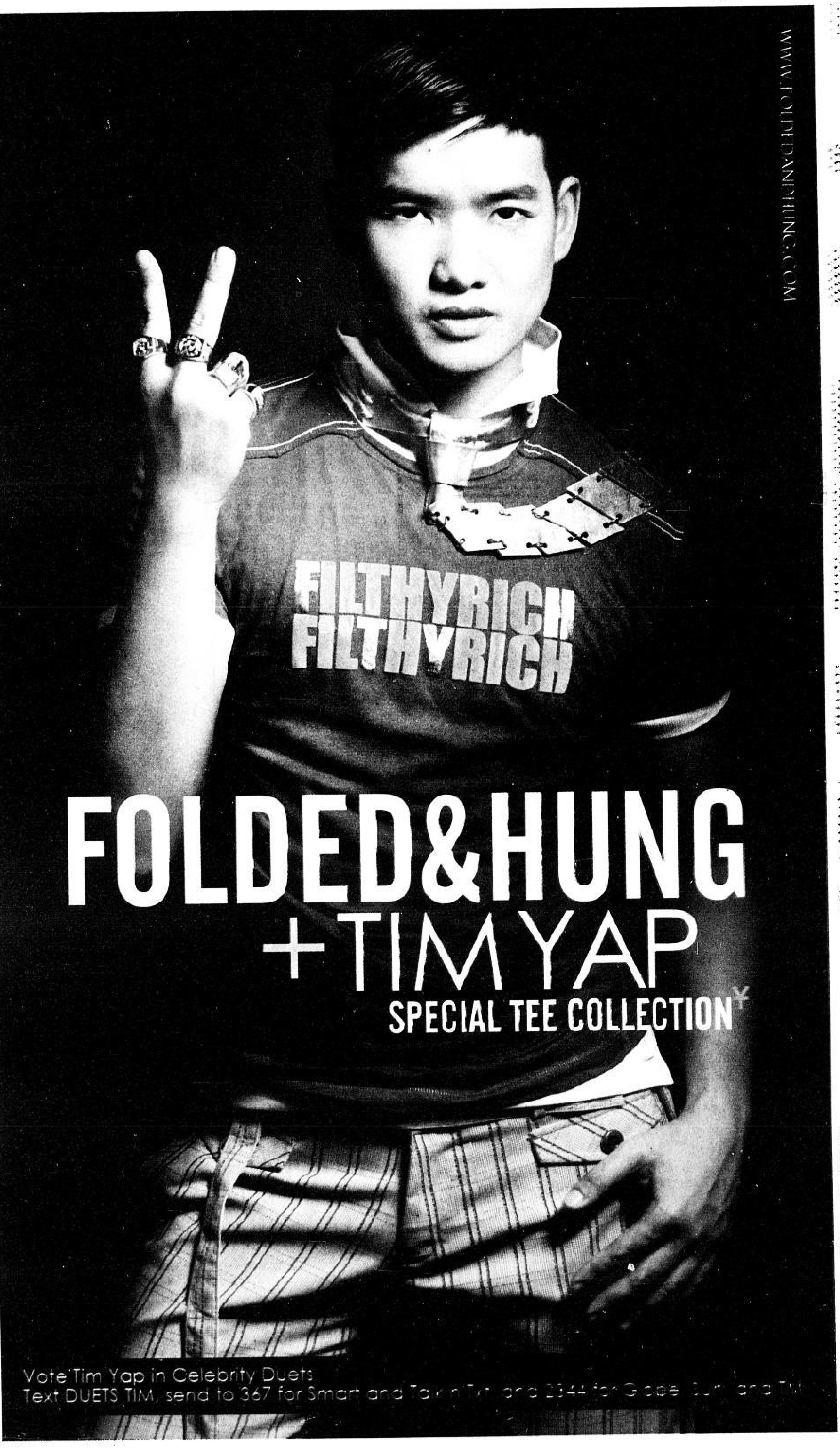
Like his best-selling "I am Super Proud to be Pinoy" ODM watch, these are sure to be hot items, and the "limited-edition" stamp just makes them so much more desirable. They are now available at all Folded & Hung stores nationwide.

Shopingeros/shopingeras, I say think it, be it!

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

Photography Tom Epperson of Snapbox
Unit 255, 2/F, Makati Shangri-la Hotel
Styling Jenni Epperson
Model Tim Yap
Makeup John Pagaduan for Shu Uemura
Hair Ryan Ko of Indigo Salon
2/F, Clubhouse Temple Drive,
Corinthian Hills, QC (tel. 6325006 to 07)
Clothes Folded & Hung

Jackpot!



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I can do anything!

Think rich, wear rich!

Jenni Epperson

CAN YOU KEEP A SECRET? This time, I can't, if only because this big "Secret" has been on everyone's lips these days. The global best-selling book, "The Secret" by Rhonda Byrne, outlines the laws of attraction as a universal scheme that can be beneficial to our lives.

The main commandment is belief. If you believe in something, and think and act according to that belief, then you are already aligning with the universe for it to happen.

Thoughts materialize, so when you think of positive things, they will naturally come into your life.

The book reveals the secret to wealth, and that is to think rich. Instead of envying the rich, focus on becoming rich yourself by cultivating a mindset of wealth. Instead of propagating the "*kawawa*" mentality that is so deeply rooted in our culture, the secret is to shift our perspectives and adopt "mental wealth" instead.

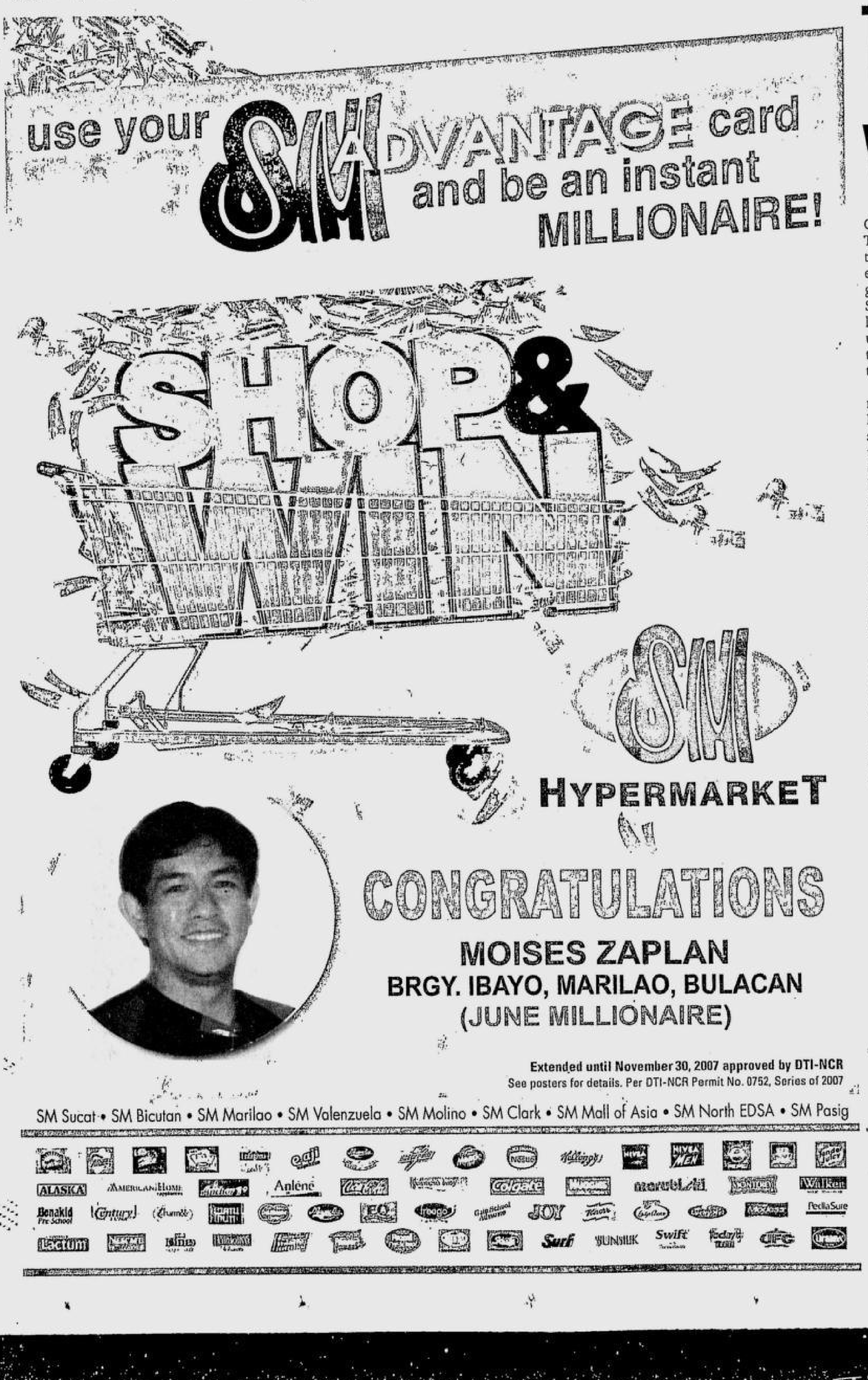
Following this mindset is being generous with what you have, because that proclaims to the universe "there is more where this comes from."

As if taking its cue from these laws of attraction, the ultra-progressive and fashion forward label Folded & Hung collaborated with Manila's oft-controversial pop icon and poster child for the "think rich-be rich" generation, Tim Yap.

Just like his exuberant personality, the Theme:Yap limited-edition graphic shirts are bold, surreal and stylish, loudly and unapolo-

THINK/ F3

Big spender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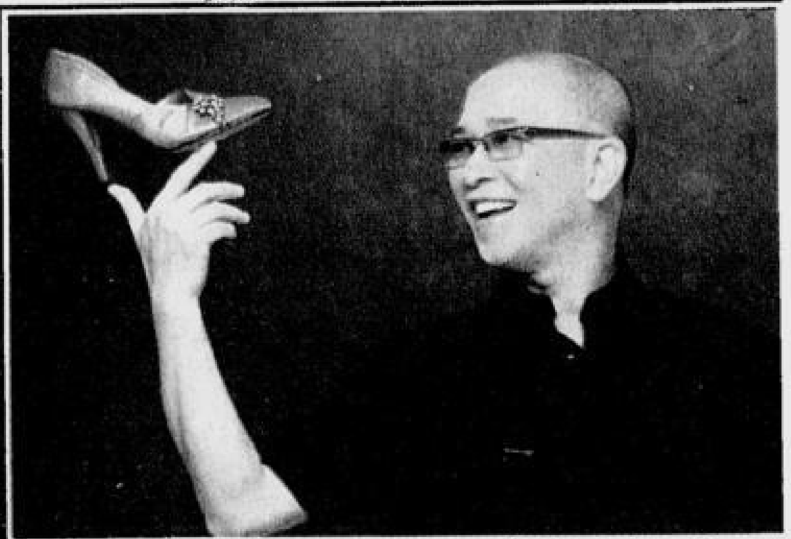

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

Modern masters (part 2)

Cesar Gaupo gained international fame as creative director of Shanghai Tang, while Froilan "Roy" Gonzales worked for the likes of Jean Patou and Pierre Cardin

MODERN/G2

Opus sport mary janes in suede and leather combination.

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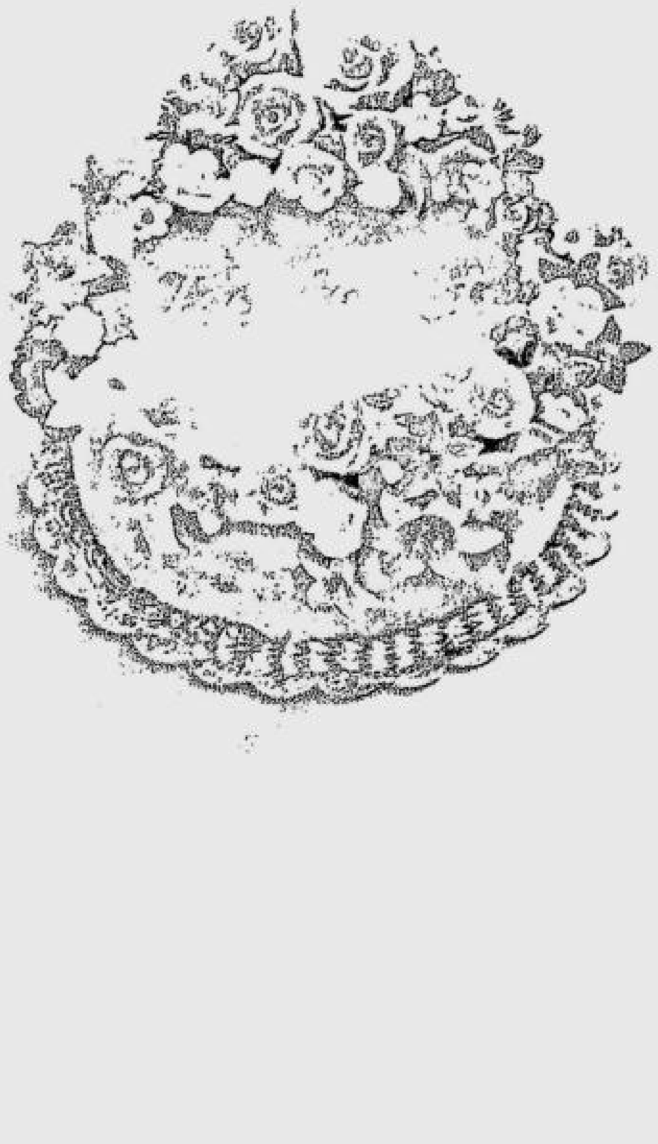

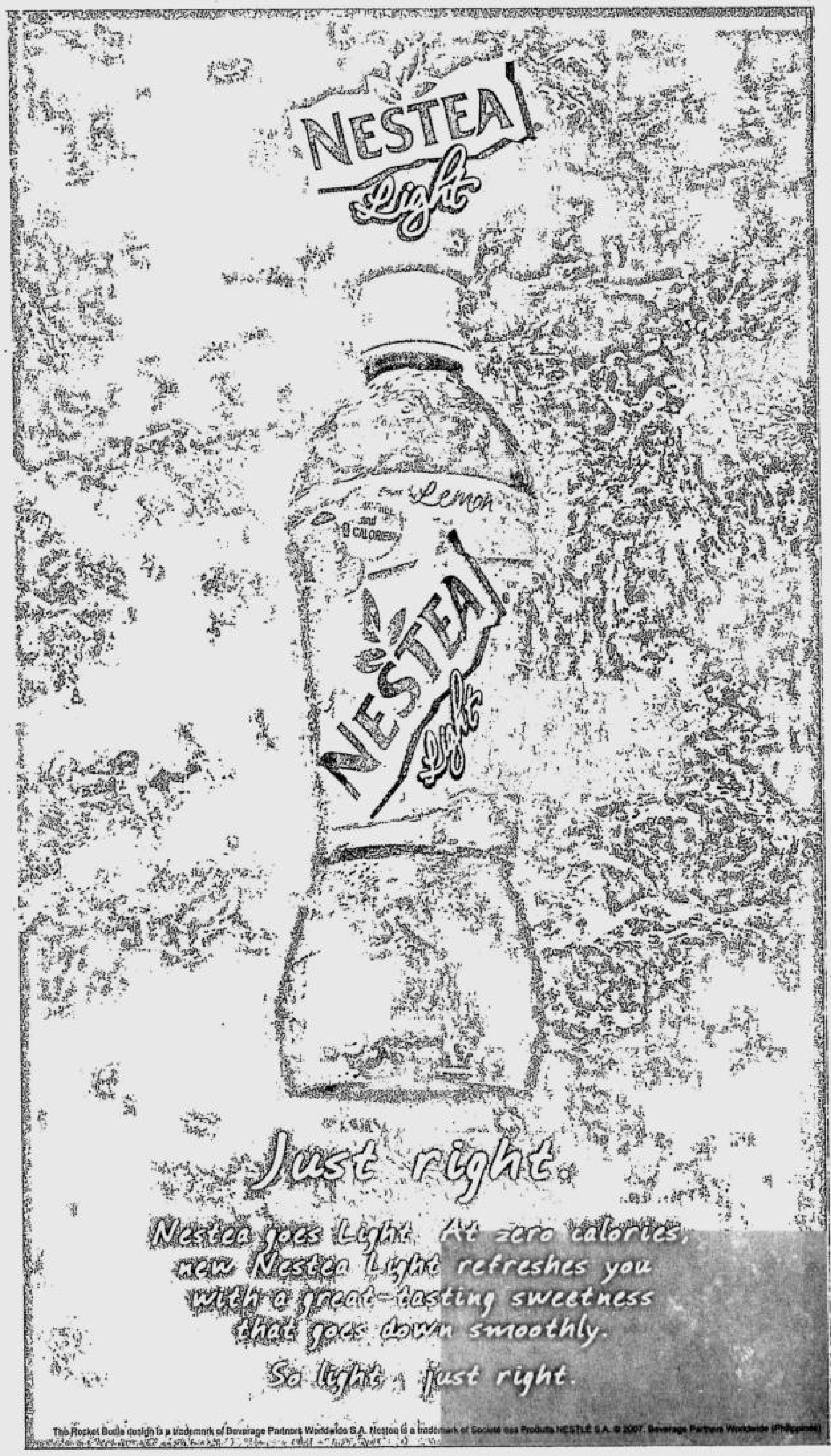

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Modern masters (part 2)

WE BRING TO YOU TWO MORE FASHION masters who have successfully worked for international houses around the globe, and yet chose to return to their beloved homeland.

Cesar Gaupo gained international fame as creative director of Shanghai Tang, while Froilan "Roy" Gonzales (Inno Sotto calls him an unsung fashion master, by the way) worked for the likes of Jean Patou and Pierre Cardin.

Both are back in Manila, Cesar to carry on with his RTW business and burgeoning ultra-fashionable shoe line, and Roy to take over the helm of R.T. Paras, a fashion house pioneered by his grandmother Roberta over a century ago.

Cesar Gaupo,

joyful dreamer

When and how did you get started in the fashion business?

I was very young then. I started as an apprentice with Aureo Alonzo during the late '60s. Even before I had graduated from high school, I was already working with Aureo. That's how I was trained in construction.

Then, I studied fashion design at Slim's. Salvacion Higgins trained me tremendously. During those times, people would say that if you were trained by Slim's, you must be really good or she (Higgins) could see something in you. And I was even asked to teach but, you know, I had just finished high school and my first reaction was "how will I do that?" She said, "I will really guide you."

They were amazed with my color combinations. She was really stunned and she was, like, "Are you sure you didn't finish fine arts or something?" She said, "I really would like to help you develop your skill."

But it was short-lived because I needed to work to live. So after that, I continued working for other fashion houses. Then I started on my own in the early '70s, and then with SM as ready-to-wear designer.

What do you consider the defining moment of your career?

When people started recognizing my skill and talent. But I would never really accept that at a certain time I was very successful because in fashion it's not just designing. There's business on the side. Without doing great in business, I don't think you can say you're very successful in fashion design. Fashion is business.

Even up to now, I still long for more things to do, more things to discover. I've never believed that I'm already there.

There are so many things to do with fashion. Everything's connected. Even home accessories, interiors, furniture, even gardening... I've never really stopped, and I think I can still do a lot of things.

What are you most known for, design-wise?

I love anything soft—silk chiffon, jersey and all that, also anything drape-y or anything that floats. I like clean lines and I love color.

What's your design philosophy?

At the end of the day, designing is not something that you do to be accepted or admired for by people. For me, it's something that will satisfy me—that's perfect in my own eyes, that will satisfy my soul.

What are the highlights of your career?

I think the most exciting moment was when I discovered—this was when I was in Hong Kong—that there were more things to do, that there was more potential in me, that I could do better.

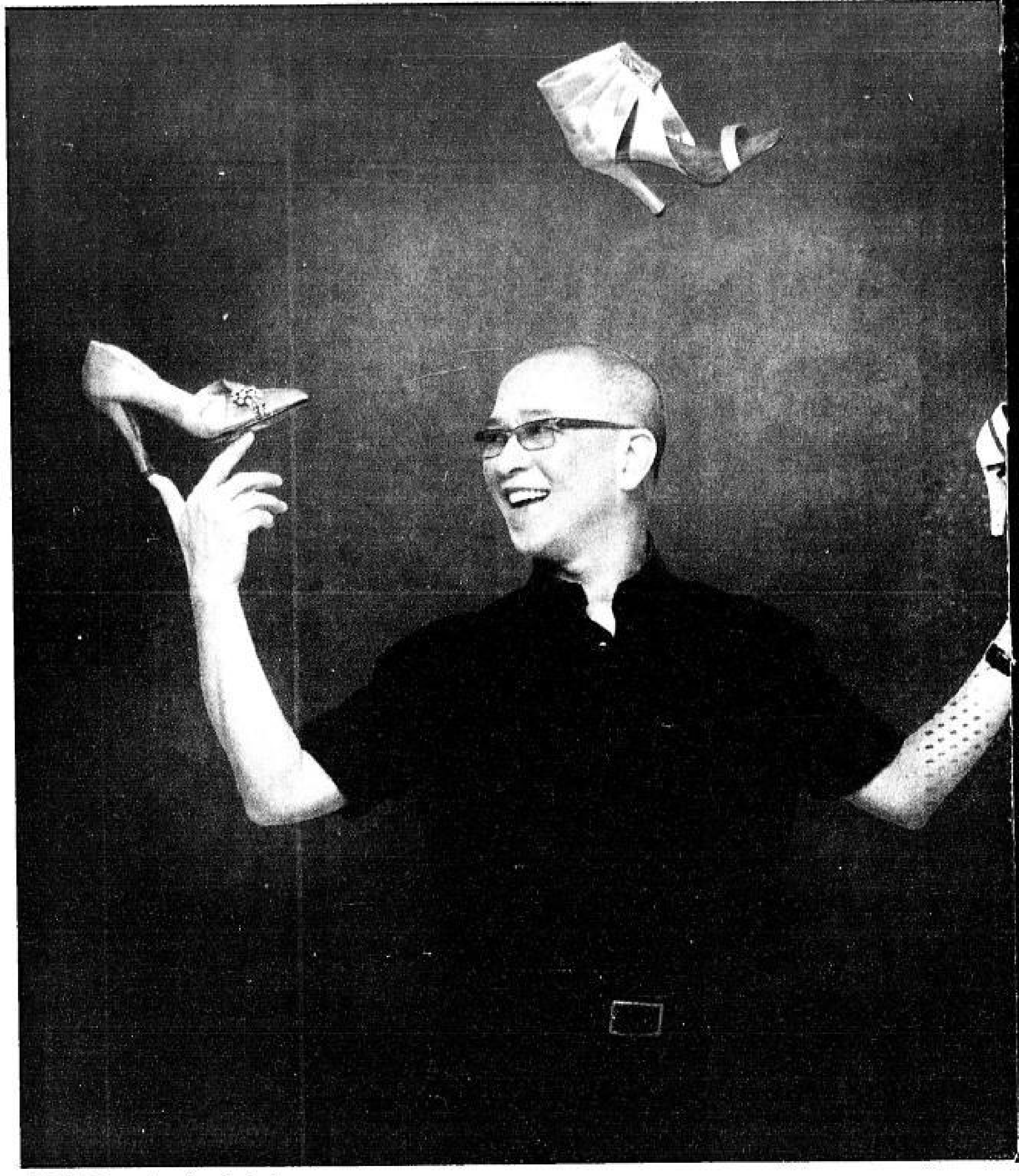
Even though you were already doing really well?

Yes, and I discovered there were more opportunities outside. I thought living in Manila was it—I was there, up there, but what's next? But everything really came about accidentally.

How did the Shanghai Tang stint happen?

Maila Javier used to model for me. She is married to the CEO of Shanghai Tang. She would come to me so I could dress her up for openings of Shanghai Tang in London, Hong Kong and all that. And then, I think David Tang would always comment on her gowns and how much he loved them. But you know they were really simple, they were never really outlandish. They were clean.

So, when they had problems with their designer in the late '90s, David Tang said, "Why don't we hire this guy?" So I was asked. I didn't really want to be in any place that I wasn't used



CESAR Gaupo juggles dual roles as couturier and shoe designer.

Froilan "Roy" Gonzales,

heir apparent

Educational background

Ateneo—Grade School, High School up to second year college; Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne

When and how did you get started in the fashion business?

I was born in it.

What's your design philosophy?

Woman first before design.

What do you consider the defining moment of your career?

I've been designing since I was 5 years old. Am I successful? I don't know. I just keep going on. How does one measure success?

What are you most known for, design-wise?

Daily wear, cocktails and evening dresses.

Why, in your opinion, are you considered one of Manila's modern masters?

I design and make dresses. How others consider me, I appreciate gratefully and I never ask why.

What does it take to be a modern master?

Experience, technique and discipline.

Who are the designers you admire?

Gianfranco Ferrè and, among the young ones, Joji Lloren.

Who among these young designers have the potential to become modern masters?

Anyone can become a modern master, I suppose. Filipinos are very crafty and inventive.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of local designers?

Their strength is their artistry and ideas. A weakness would be their technique.

How have you adapted to the changing times and fashions?

When you're in the business, you just feel it in you.

How do you continue to hone your craft?

By traveling and getting to discover new materials to make new forms, or making old forms look new.

What are your current projects?

I never make projects. God makes them for me.

Where are you at this point in your career?

Getting there, getting there. Never wanted to be on top, because once you're on top, the only way to go is down.

What else do you want to achieve in this industry?

To make people aware of how rich and artistic Filipino ideas are.

How would you describe the local fashion industry?

What industry?

What should be done to improve the situation?

We should have stronger support and sponsorships during international contests and exhibits, and we consider our fashion designers not only as designers but also as cultural ambassadors.

What makes you proud to be a Pinoy fashion designer?

Maybe in my little way, I can uplift the image of the Philippines abroad by showing others that it's not only about kidnapping or bombings or terrorists here—that there is also beauty, artistry and rich ideas in our country.

It always makes me proud to see our beauty queens win in international contests, or when Filipina models make it abroad. Also, when Frederick Peralta and Joji Lloren won in the International Fashion show in Paris.

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Sittings editor Millet Arzaga
Makeup and grooming
Abby de Leon of Emphasis Salon for Cesar Gaupo
Jigs Mayuga of L'Oreal Paris
for Roy Gonzales and model
Hair Nante Alingasa of Kiehl's for model

Model Girlie Benitez
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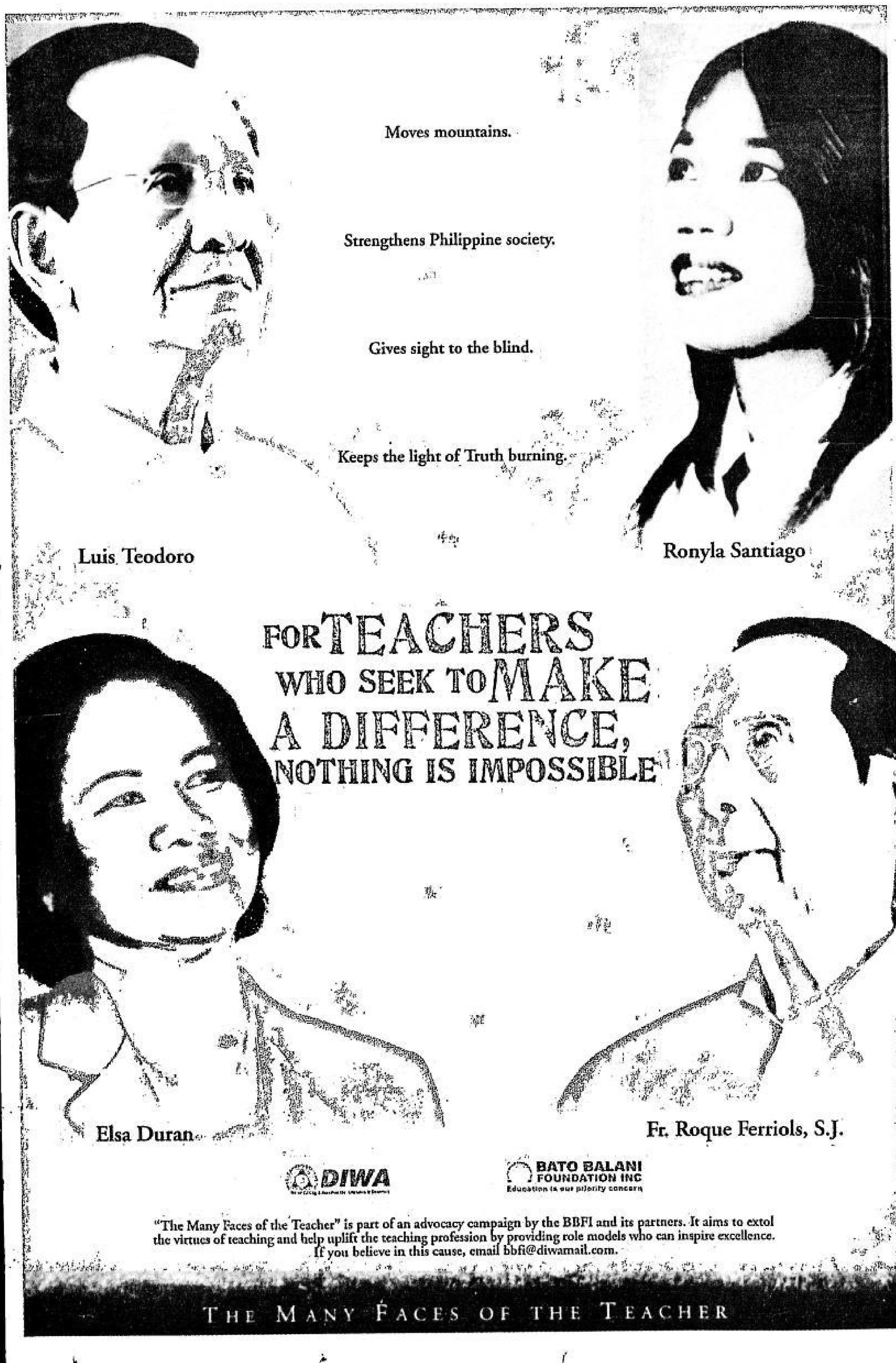

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"WOMAN before design," says Froilan "Roy" Gonzales, who is now at the helm of R.T. Paras.

to. *Masyado akong*, "this is it and this is me, don't bother me." But in the end, I just had to do it. Designing in Manila was getting to be boring, after all. So I thought I'd give it a try and see what happens.

Are you still working for them?

I resigned in 2005 but they asked me to do a few things for them this year. I have a new contract, actually, but it's totally different from the previous. It's not anymore full-time, staying in Hong Kong.

I would not really allow that to happen again, that I would have to stay in Hong Kong. I had a lot of offers there after Shanghai Tang. I didn't accept them because I really want to live here.

For me, where I live is very important. I wouldn't trade it for earning capacity and fame. *Hindi 'yan ang* priority *ko sa buhay*. I'm not into the hifalutin lifestyle. I want to live a simple and joyful life.

Why the transition to shoes?

As I said earlier, I want to do other things. Besides, it's always been a problem for my clients and me to find shoes whenever I make clothes or gowns. They don't have to be *terno*, but the design and quality of the materials should be good. I can make simple clothes, but I want the best shoes and bags. Not decorated, nothing like that, but they have to make a statement.

Why, in your opinion, are you considered one of Manila's modern masters?

I love hearing that, but I just don't know. I think people who say that should answer that.

What does it take to be a modern master?

Hard work and consistency. You have to be consistent with what you like. Plus, you also have to be a dreamer.

You've been designing for 35 years. How have you adapted to the changing times and fashions? How do you continue to hone your craft?

Siguro yung attitude *ko rin na* I never dwell on my last work. There's always something new for me. If people say I'm a good designer, then I aspire to be better than what they imagine me to be. There's never a stop or pause. I have to continue developing, innovating, creating. You have to keep coming up with something different.

Where do you draw all these ideas from?

Siguro sa paligid ko lang. Even from people, even from women, like you. When women talk, move, they're telling me *kung ano yung* needs *nila, kung saan sila nae*-excite. This drives me to do things for a certain person or character or attitude. You know, when I do designs for people, it's always the person who inspires me. *Kung sino yung nagpapatahi, siya yung* inspiration *ko*. Never someone or something else.

What are your current projects?

Right now I'm doing consultancy for Citem, for fashion accessories. We just finished joining the Hong Kong Fashion Week last July. I did consultancy for 11 companies for fashion and fine jewelry.

I love it because it's not only about designing the piece but also designing the whole ambience of the booth. I know where they're from and I know where they should go. I love that—planning, making visions, making goals, conceptualizing. Those are things I learned from Hong Kong where we used to work on five- to ten-year projects.

Where are you at this point in your career?

Right now, I am very comfortable with who I am and what I am doing. It's all about enjoying the things around me. And I know there's going to be another exciting and joyful chapter in my life.

Contact details

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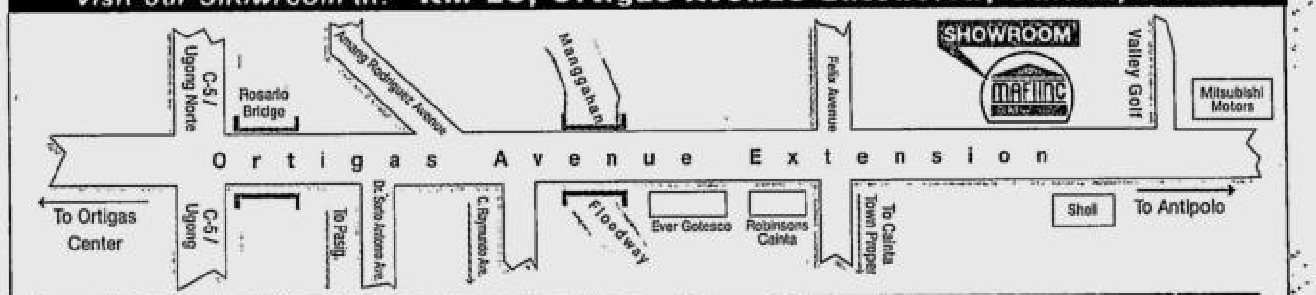

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Leiron Paul Noriel, Parañaque City
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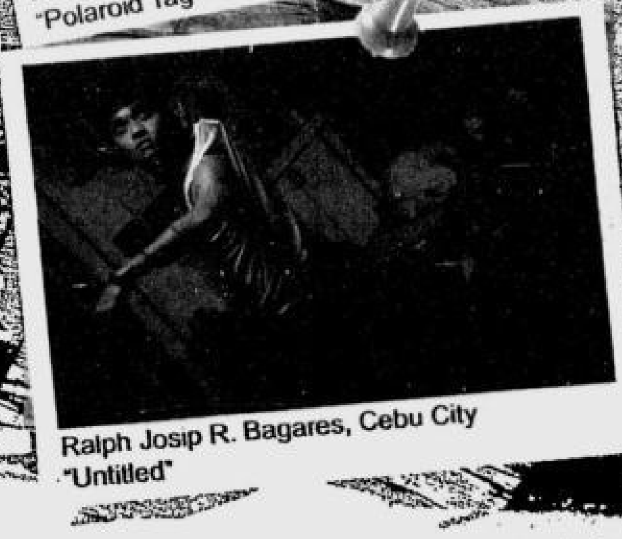
What's hanging out for you? Malls? Some might say going for the latest flick. Or some would do some chitchats over coffee and a fag. We define it different. Our way of literally Hangin' out with a buddy. Go figure!

Angelo P. Lico, Antipolo City
"Polaroid Tag"



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Now... need we say more?

Sole comfort

CLASSIC lace-up pair for work and play

Florsheim is standing by its mature, sturdy image while slowly reaching out to a younger, more adventurous market

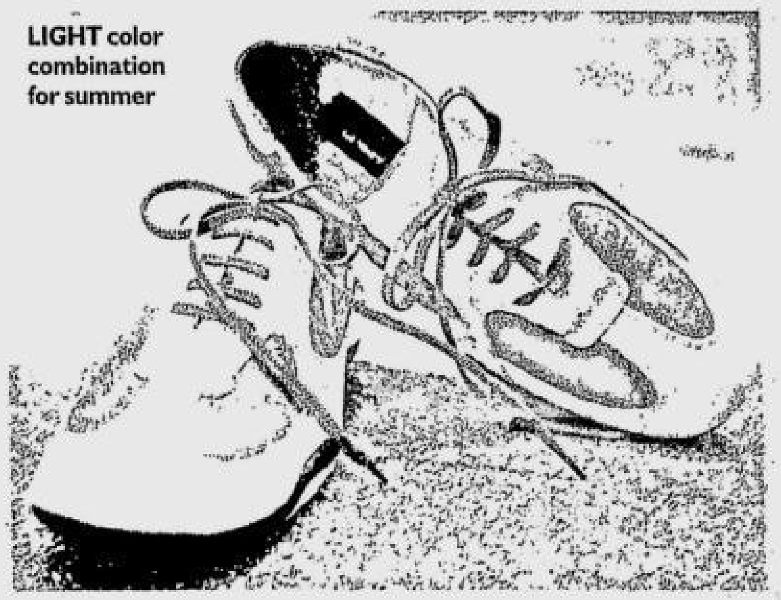
Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by August dela Cruz

SINCE FLORSHEIM BEGAN SELLING men's shoes in 1892, the United States-based shoe company has never been able to fully shake off its stuffy image. Despite the brand's heritage—or perhaps because of it—not a few young men still equate Florsheim with the moccasins, boots and wing-tipped leather shoes their fathers and grandfathers had likely worn.

Rather than lose sleep over it, John Plummer, president of Florsheim Asia Pacific Ltd., welcomes such a lingering impression. The Melbourne-based Australian recently visited Manila to grace the opening of Florsheim's 13th store at the TriNoma in Quezon City.

Apart from giving the brand, which is represented locally by Retail Specialist, Inc., a clear idea of where it stands in the market, such a relatively conservative position helps it redefine its image in a more subtle and realistic way, said Plummer.

RICH tan shade gives this pair a laidback feel.



LIGHT color combination for summer

"Some people still think Florsheim is their fathers' shoes. It works for us since their fathers have never complained about the brand's quality and how it offers good value for money. In today's crowded and competitive market, it's reassuring for people to know that they can still rely on a pair of quality shoes."

Comfort is still one of Florsheim's major selling points aimed at a more mature market. The brand isn't likely to abandon this enviable market positioning. In fact, it further redefined this attribute with the introduction of an exclusive feature called Comfortech 15 years ago.

"Florsheim has always been renowned for comfort," said Plummer. "There's a big demand for comfort-specific footwear, and we're more than happy to give it to them."

This doesn't mean, however, that Florsheim has failed to keep in step with the times. Otherwise, it wouldn't have lasted this long and grown into a global brand with branches in almost every major city in the world.

Offbeat styles

On the contrary, it has slowly but surely beefed up its casual line to cater to a younger, more adventurous market. Nowhere is this thrust more evident than in developing countries with a considerably young population like the Philippines.

That's why Florsheim offers more casual and lace-up shoes with offbeat styles and color combinations in emerging markets in Asia and Latin America than it does in Europe, Japan and the US.

In tropical countries like the Philippines, the brand has also taken into consideration the warm climate. Apart from casual shoes, leather sandals have been enjoying brisk sales. In contrast, Florsheim stores in Europe and the US are stronger on boots, a traditional product that dates back to the late 1800s, especially during fall and winter months.

"There are styles that are specifically designed for the Asian market," Plummer added. "Not only are the needs and trends in Asia different, the fitting requirements are also different."

Caucasian feet tend to be longer and narrower, while those of Asians are generally smaller and wider. Asians also have higher insteps, Plummer noted. In keeping with Florsheim's promise to provide customers with the most comfortable shoes money can buy, it has put a great deal of attention on fit as well.

"You may offer the best-looking shoes in the world, but if they don't fit your customers properly, you won't be able to sell them," he said.

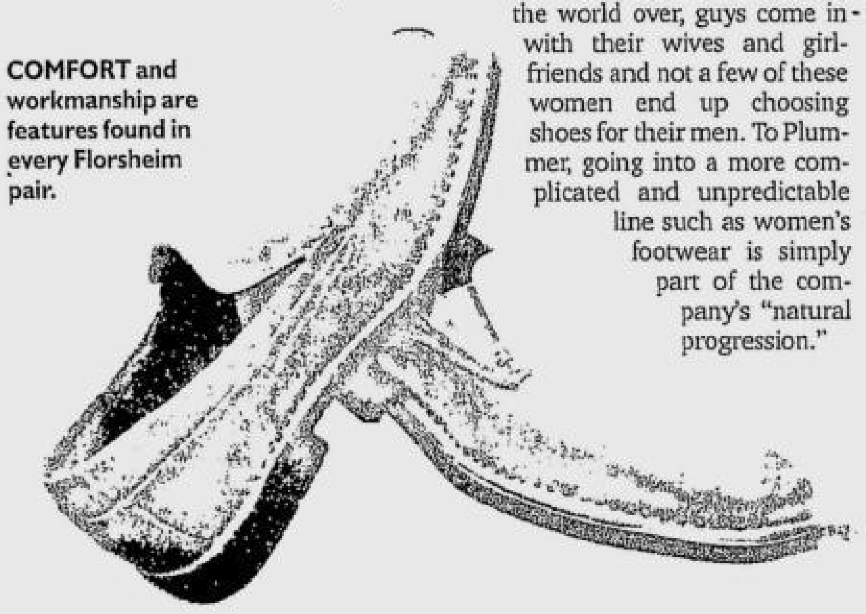
Subtle changes

If anything, Florsheim's real challenge is to keep its core group of mature customers happy as it introduces subtle changes in an attempt to expand its market. Aspiring marketing people take note: Drastic and dramatic changes, if handled haphazardly, are more likely to alienate existing customers than win over new ones, said Plummer.

Of course, there's plenty of room for growth as far as Florsheim is concerned. By virtue of its heritage and strong brand recognition, it revived its women's line two years ago. Florsheim first introduced the line in 1931, but had to discontinue it a few years later.

"It's a form of brand extension," said Plummer. "We've taken a well-known brand known for its quality and came up with a women's line that offers the same degree of quality and workmanship in a much prettier, daintier package."

In almost every Florsheim store the world over, guys come in with their wives and girlfriends and not a few of these women end up choosing shoes for their men. To Plummer, going into a more complicated and unpredictable line such as women's footwear is simply part of the company's "natural progression."



COMFORT and workmanship are features found in every Florsheim pair.

Hero's burial for Valera

NATIONAL ARTIST RAMON VALERA, the illustrious Filipino fashion designer, will be given full military honors when his remains are transferred to the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig on his 95th birthday on Aug. 31.

The hero's burial follows his conferment as National Artist in the field of Architecture, Design and Allied Arts (Fashion Design) in 2006.

Valera, who died in May 1972 at age 60, is the first fashion designer to be proclaimed a National Artist by President Macapagal-Arroyo upon the recommendation of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The conferment was held at Malacañang Palace on June 9, 2006.

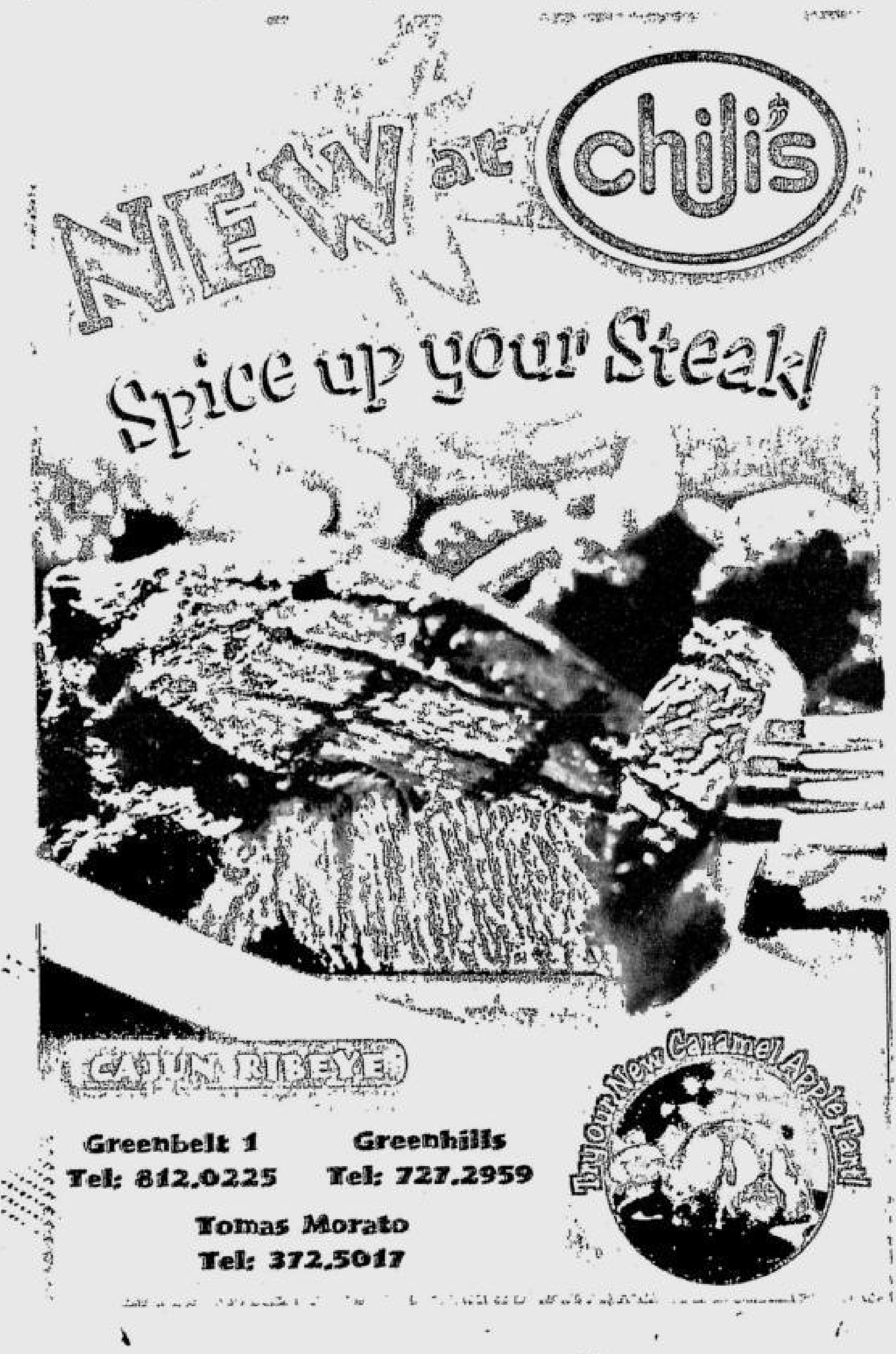
During his brief lifetime, Valera created gowns and ternos for Philippine First Ladies from Aurora Quezon to Imelda Marcos. He was the only male couturier among his contemporaries like Pacita Longos, Marina Antonio, Purita Escurdia and Mina Roa. He could design, cut, baste and sew all by himself and was known to discard a finished gown if it did not meet his standards.

Acknowledging Valera as a master of couture innovation, fashion editor Thelma Sioson-San Juan wrote: "Valera produced a single piece of clothing from a 4-piece ensemble consisting of a blouse, skirt, overskirt and long scarf. He unified the *baro't saya* into a single dress with exaggerated bell sleeves, cinched at the waist, grazing the ankle and zipped up at the back. Using zipper in place of hooks was already a radical change. Dropping the *panuelo* became an even bigger shock."

RAMON Valera

On May 2007, his high-school alma mater, De La Salle, bestowed on Valera the Distinguished La Sallian Award, the highest and most prestigious honor given by the De La Salle Alumni Association to an alumnus who had earned distinction for his vision, leadership and integrity in his chosen field.

Valera's hero's burial will be attended by his only surviving sister, Lulu Valera-Zulueta, nieces, nephews and other close family members.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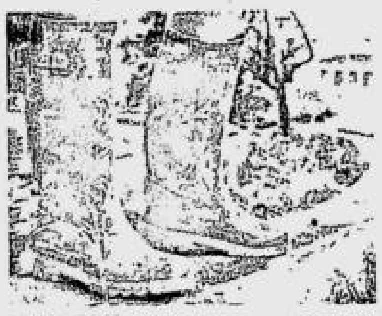
SUBLIME

PUPPY love



ORIGAMI me

WHAT'S A BUSY GIRL TO DO when the rains kick in? Simple, really. Get a pair of Plueys and go out there and brave the floods!

Pluie (*ploo·wi*) is French for "rain." Plueys is an independent label of rain boots made of durable rubber with soft cotton lining and sturdy treaded soles for comfort and function. The fashionable galoshes are distributed in the United States, United Kingdom and now in Manila.

Plueys' eye-catching colors and unique graphic prints bring back the fun we had as children when we were eager to play in the rain. Get a pair to go with your every rainy-day outfit.

The shoes come with a waterproof tote, so you can bag your boots and be rain-ready anytime, anywhere.

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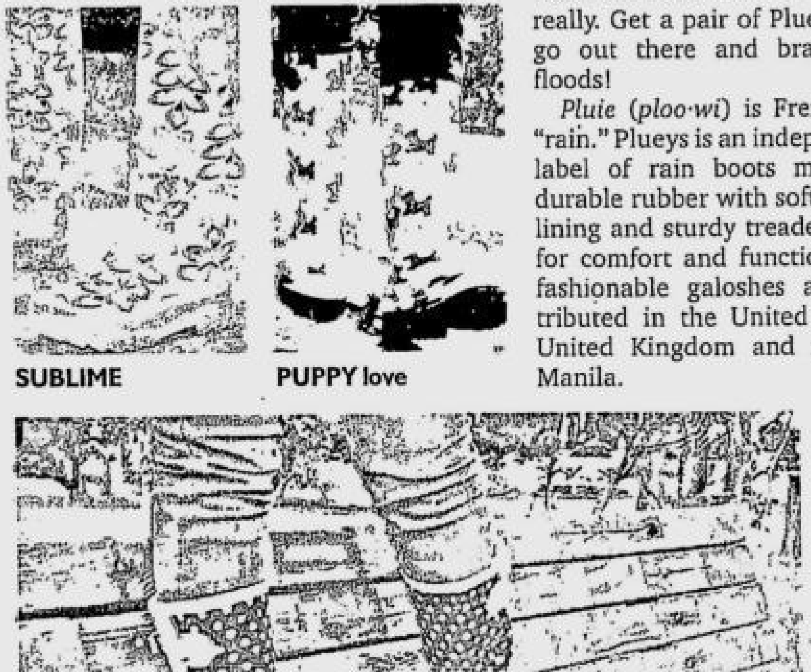

LOTSA dots

SUGAR plum

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Kasama sa lahat ng panahon.

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See posters for details

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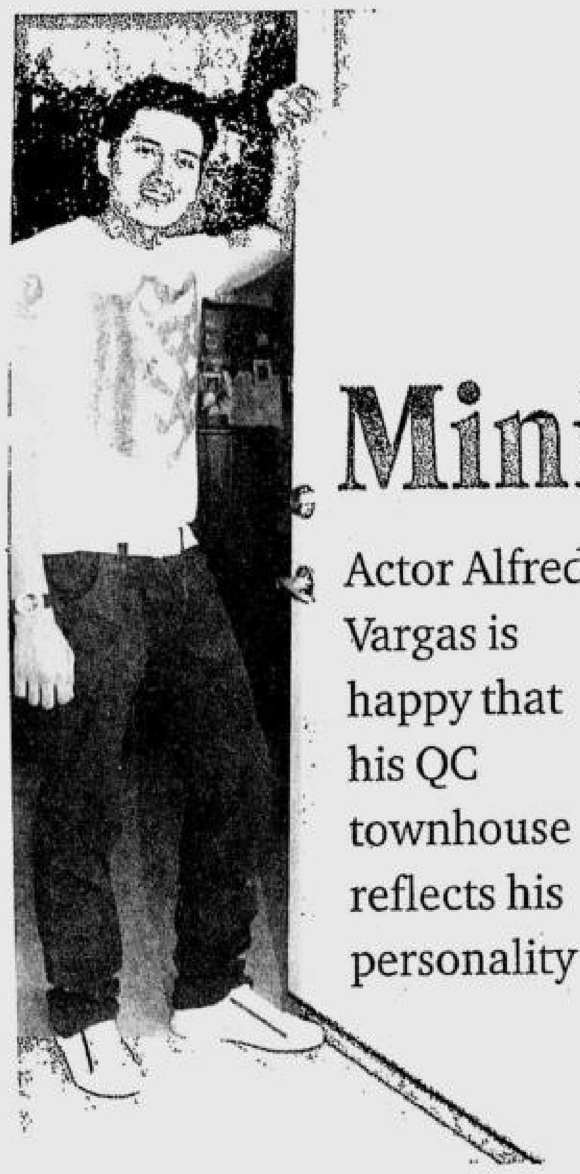


GLASSES filled with balls of twine, white pebbles and sand lend the living room a sense of the outdoors.

HAPPY Buddha is a Christmas gift from manager Lolit Solis.

Minimalist, masculine

Actor Alfred Vargas is happy that his QC townhouse reflects his personality

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

Photos by Rudy Esperas

ACTOR ALFRED VARGAS DESCRIBES HIS three-level Quezon City townhouse as "very Zen, masculine, minimalist and modern."

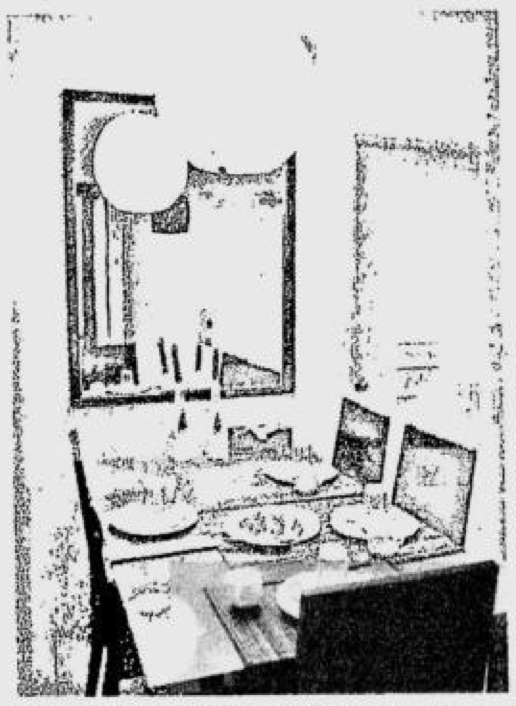
The space reflects the resident's personality—a bachelor, and one of local show town's most sought-after hunks.

Alfred says he worked closely with interior designer Michelle Dumlao: "She asked for my input on everything, down to the cabinets and place mats."

Michelle confirms, "Alfred played an active role in the design process. He's also an artist and has lots of ideas."

To add a touch of nature to the *sala*, Alfred picked accessories like balls of twine, a tree bark and a glass-topped cantilevered ledge filled with white pebbles.

MINIMALIST/ H4



TOGETHER, Alfred and designer Michelle Dumlao picked everything, even the place mats for the dining table.

MUG on his dresser is imprinted with a portrait from his nude coffee table book.

ON THE ref, magnets with snaps of Alfred and girlfriend LJ Reyes.

THE actor does his homework in the entertainment center—preparing for roles by watching movies.

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LUZON: CSI San Fernando La Union Mall- Aug 3-5 - CSI Mall Dagupan - Aug 29-Sept 4 - Paseo Real Mall -Tuguegarao - Sept 7-9 - LCC Mall- Naga - Sept 7-14 - SM Clark - July 30 - Aug 5 - SM Dasmariñas - Aug 11-17

VISAYAS: Lee Plaza Mall - Dumaguete- July 13-15 - BQ Mall -Bohol - July 12-22 - Ormoc Superdome - Aug 3-5 - Real Food Centrum - Tacloban - Aug 14-20 - Ayala Center Cebu- Aug 28-Sept 3 - SM Iloilo - Sept 10 - 16 - SM Bacolod - Sept 24-30

MINDANAO: Gaisano Mall Davao- July 17-23 - Limketkai Mall CDO- July 30-Aug 5 - Valencia City Gym- Aug 24-26 - KCC Mall Gensan - Aug 24-Sept 2 - Bgy San Miguel MP Hall - Iligan - Sept 7-9 - Medina Gym Ozamis- Sept 14-16

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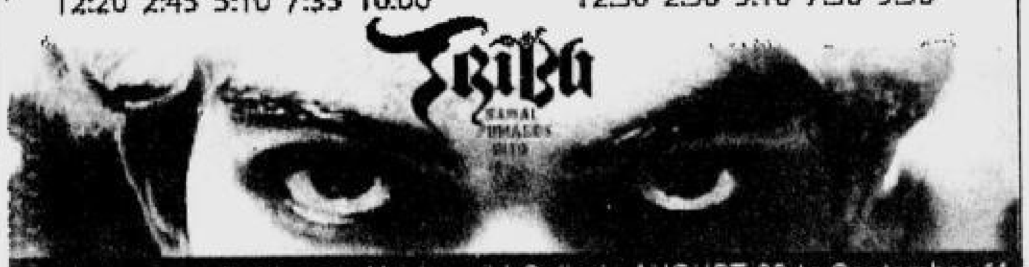
- 5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
- 6 DON'T LOOK BACK 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
- 7 RUSH HOUR 3 1:00 3:00 / HAIRSPRAY 5:00 7:20 9:40
- 8 A LOVE STORY 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
- 9 EVAN ALMIGHTY 1:50 3:50 5:50 7:50 9:50
- 10 LAST LEGION 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50



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- 5 A LOVE STORY 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
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- 2 INVASION
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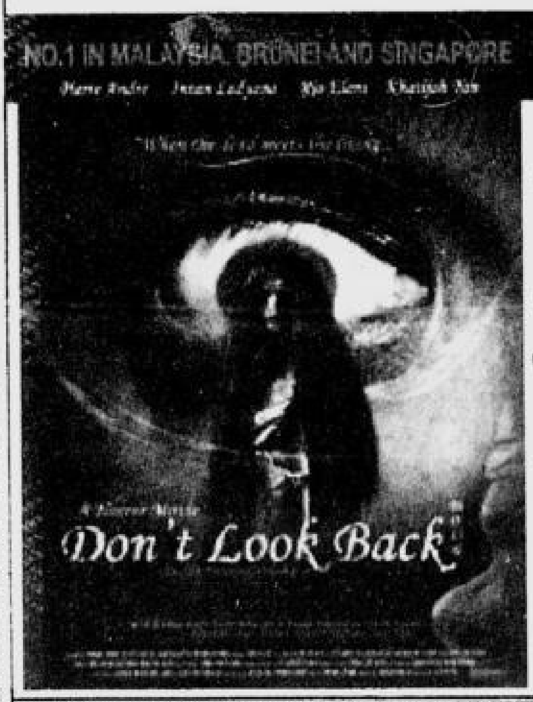
- 4 DON'T LOOK BACK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Don't Look Back

Don't Look Back

This horrifying and mysterious story is about a young man named Darma (Pierre Andre) who attempts to know the cause of death of Rose, his fiancee (Intan Ladyana), who was found dead in mysterious circumstances. Darma must now work with Rose's twin sister Sen to solve the mystery behind the death.

They begin their investigation with a visit to Rose's house, where Darma finds a bottle, and Rose's digital camera, which only deepens the mystery.

Bringing these unusual evidences home, Darma finds himself facing horrifying events that fling his life into chaos.

Given a vacation by his boss (Jalaludin Hassan) at work, Darma seeks the help of his aunt Mak Lang (Khatijah Tan), who lives with her daughter Lin (Rio Elani).

At Kampung, Darma and Sen discover the shocking truth that whatever happens, they should never dare LOOK BACK, because when life meets death, anything can happen!

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ILOILO

- 1 LICENSE to WED
- 2 A LOVE STORY
- 3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
- 4 EVAN ALMIGHTY
- 5 THREE
- 6 SINKING of JAPAN

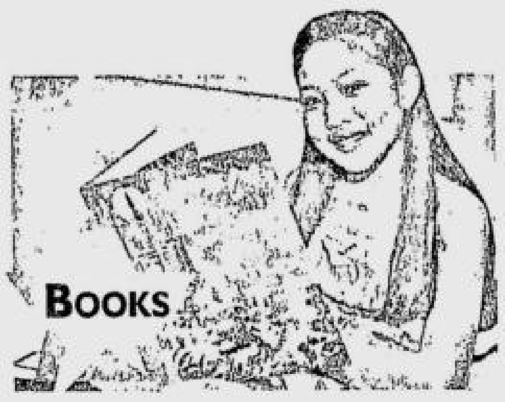
21

RITA IRINGAN

I LOVE reading about fairy-tale princesses in this collection, "Favorite Fairy Tales Treasury" by Jane Reiley, Robyn Bryan and Carol Krentz.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

PHOTO BY RODEL ROTONI



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② 1408 MTRCB PG-13 12:10, 2:30 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

③ EVAN ALMIGHTY MTRCB: GP 12:40, 3:00 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

④ HAIRSPRAY MTRCB PG-13 12:10, 2:30 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

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LAST LEGION 12:50,3:15,5:40, 8:05,10:30	BOURNE ULTIMATUM PG13 2:30,5:00,7:30,10:00	THE INVASION PG13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30

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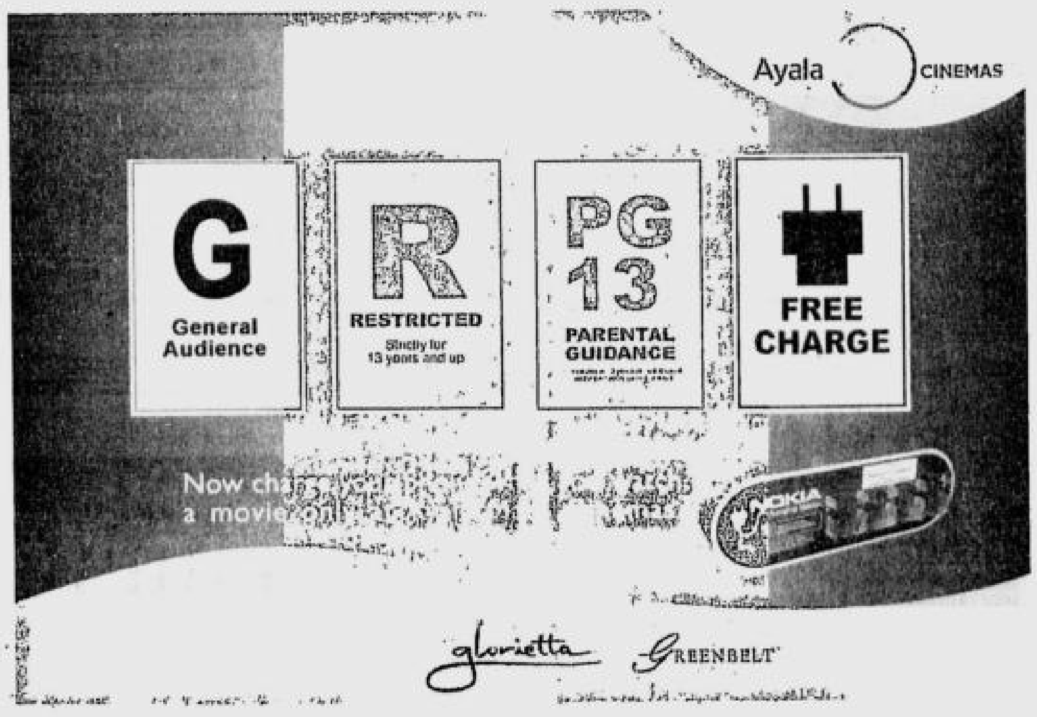

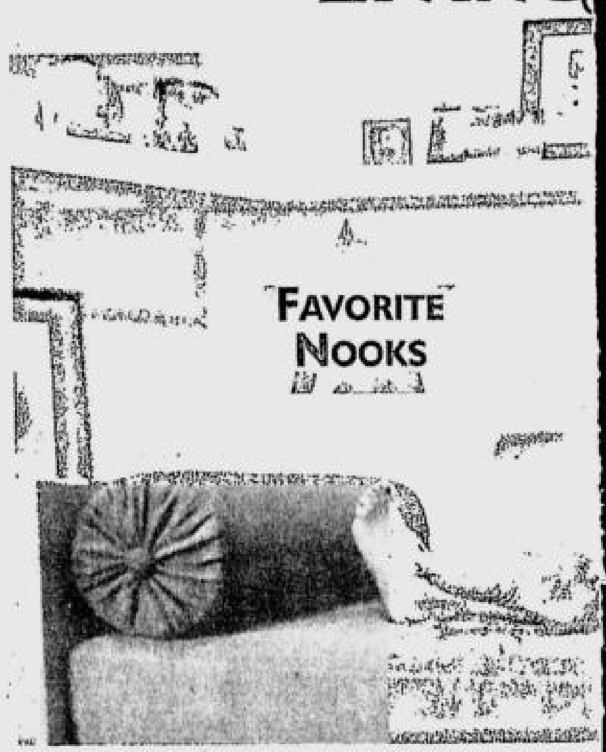

FAVORITE NOOKS

BIANCA GONZALEZ

MY FAVORITE spot in the house is the living room sofa from work—super *pagod* but still not sleepy—I plop in on my laptop and go online. That's when I write my bl mail.

'The Hunting Party' NY preem on Aug. 22

RICHARD Gere and wife Carey Lowell REUTER

KRISTINA KREPELA REUTE

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TESSIE TOMAS

MY OFFICE at home is my private space. It was my idea, but interior designer Cynthia Garlan (whom I worked with on my old lifestyle show, "Feel at Home") helped me execute it. She thought of painting the walls butter yellow, which brightens up the room. I put in a divan because I love taking siestas. I also read books and magazines there. The office doubles as a guest room. The divan has two cushions. That's why two people can sleep here—you can lay one of the cushions on the floor.

Bayani San Diego Jr.
PHOTO BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

When I get home
to the couch, turn
g and answer my

Marinel R. Cruz
RODEL ROTONI

ZEKE DIMAGUILA

I HAVE a dog in Sydney. Her name is Duchess and she's 12, half-Collie and half-German Shepherd. Here in Laguna, when I visit, I take care of my grandmother's two dogs: the mongrel Tagpi and her pup Banker (in photo). Banker is named after the character on "Kapamilya: Deal or No Deal." Tagpi is 9, and has given birth three times. My mom cooks special dog food for them, from leftover meat and rice.

Bayani San Diego Jr.
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	4 ARE WE DONE YET?	5 THE LAST LEGION	6 A LOVE STORY	7 1408
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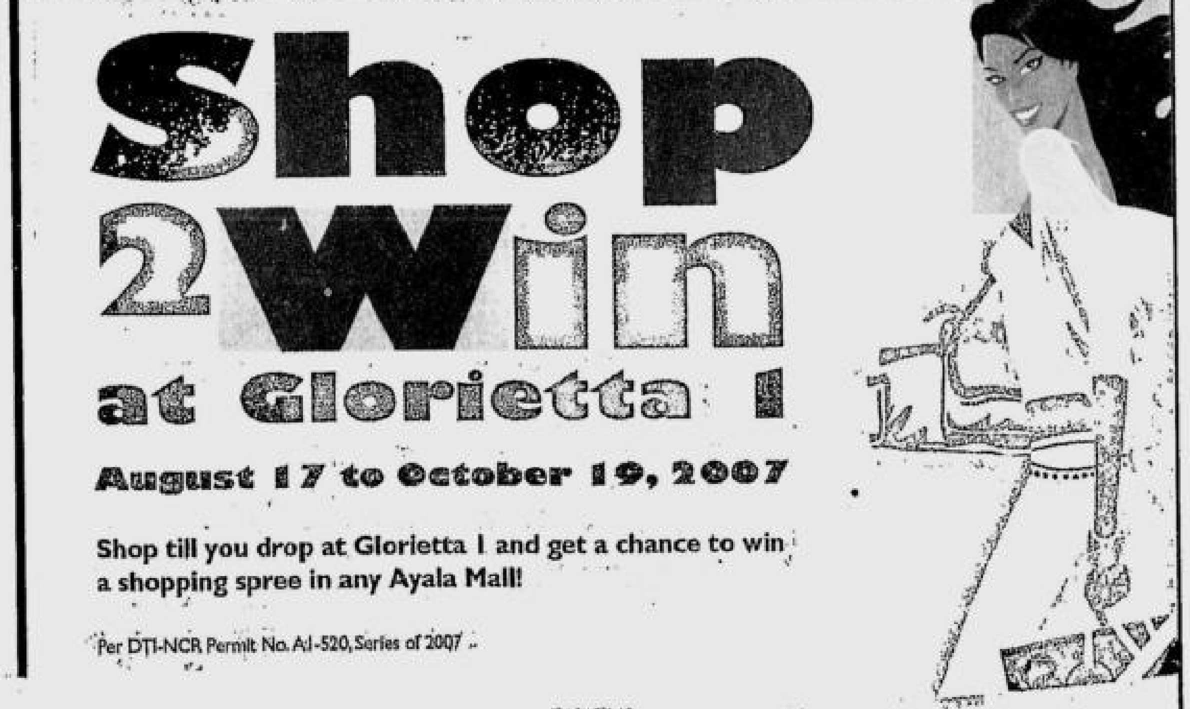

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Minimalist, masculine

From page H1

SPACIOUS walk-in closet leads to the bathroom.

The ledge draws attention to the accent wall, which showcases Alfred's nude photographs taken by Ronnie Salvacion.

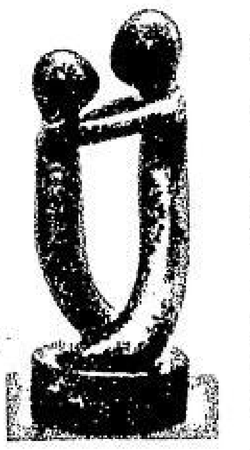
Off-white Roman shades with black trim imbue the place with a "beach house" feel.

"Alfred put in a red chair for color," Michelle says.

Adding a burst of energy to the living room is an art work by Jose Maria de Jesus, who also created the Virgin Mary in the "modern grotto" at the entrance.

"A lot of the décor are gifts," Alfred says. "The mother-and-child figure and Murano pitcher in the living room are from my mom."

On the second level is the bedroom, which Alfred considers his sanctuary. Roman shades and hanging lamps were installed in the room.



MOTHER-and-child wood carving is a gift from his mom.

Michelle explains that a hanging lamp in the bedroom is all the rage in Europe.

Alfred also built a spacious walk-in closet that leads to his art deco bathroom.

Opposite the bedroom is his home office. Alfred is into photography, and makes full use of the computer graphics editor Photoshop.

On the third floor is an entertainment center and mini-gym combined. For this area, Alfred chose cove lights for the ceiling. Michelle installed discreet wood panels for Alfred's extensive DVD collection.

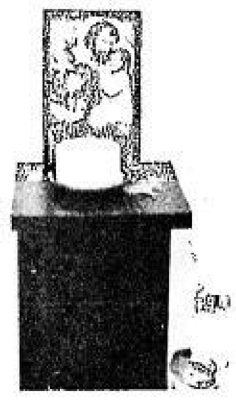
He can spend hours here, he says, watching movies as research. He recounts, "To prepare for the (action-drama) 'Banal,' I watched 'Training Day' and 'Infernal Affairs.'"

The mini-gym is equipped with a treadmill and ab machine.

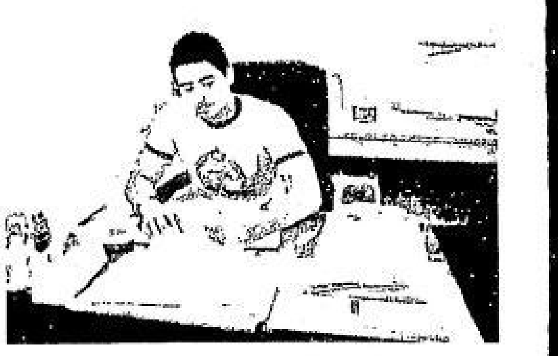
"This house was designed so I could do all the things I love, to make me a better actor and person" notes the star of GMA 7's "Impostora" and "Nuts Entertainment."

Alfred believes he was able to maximize the potential of the townhouse in spite of limited space and budget.

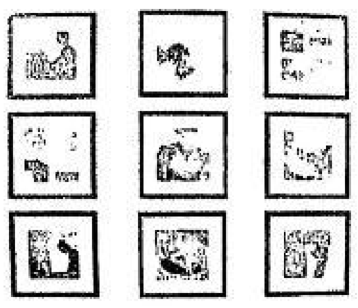
"It's only 118 sq. m.," he points out.



ALTAR in the hallway. Bulacan priests give religious figures as presents.



LOTS of paperwork await him at the home office, equipped with a Mac.

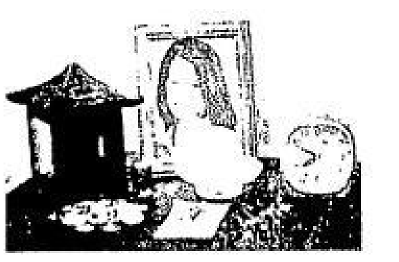


ACCENT wall showcases Alfred's nude photographs by Ronnie Salvacion.

"From outside, it looks [small], but it's actually very spacious. And although it's very private, It's just 10 minutes away from GMA 7."

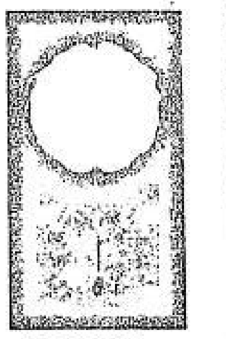
The house allows him a semblance of normalcy, he says, a respite from the hustle and bustle of show biz.

"Here, I feel free and unwatched," he quips.

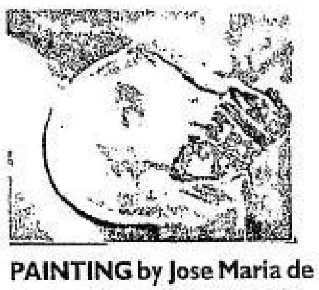


BEDSIDE reading table features a mini pagoda and a photo of LJ..

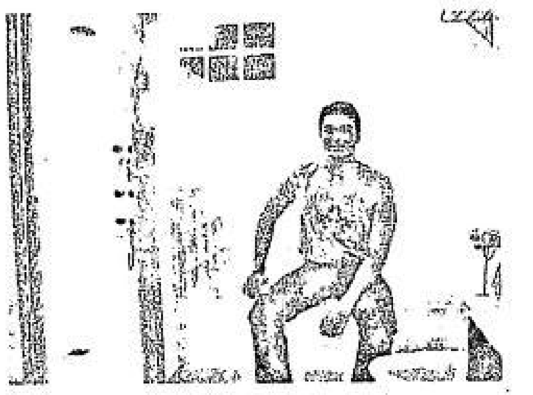
A SMILING hunk on the steps of his three-level home .



HANGING lamp in the bedroom.



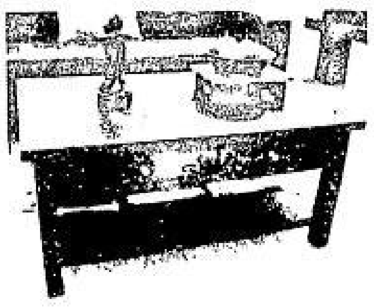
PAINTING by Jose Maria de Jesus adds color to the *sala*.



SPIFFY bathroom with jet shower is accented with art deco blocks.

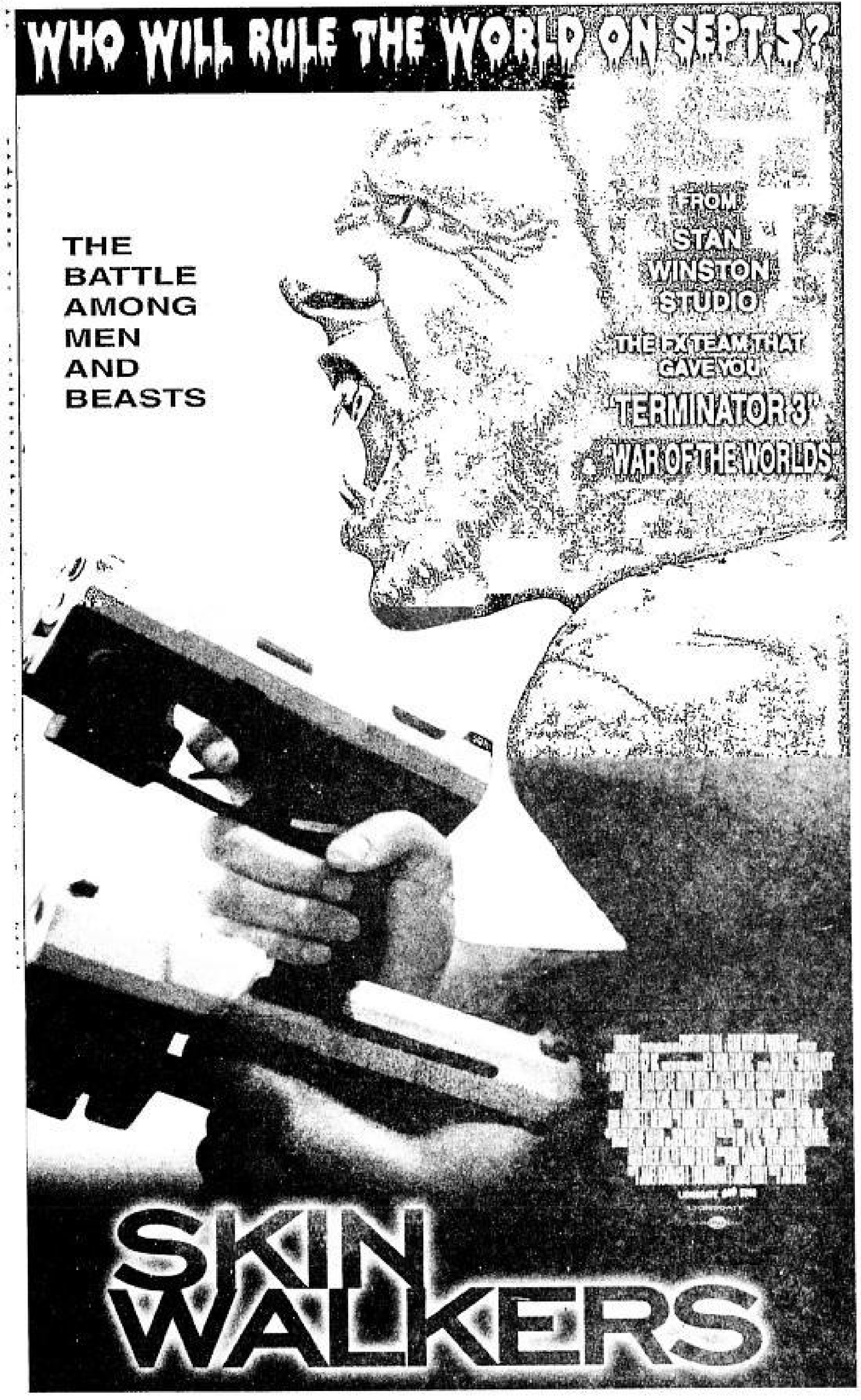
HE BOUGHT this still from his favorite movie, "The Godfather," in LA. The movie stars James Caan, Marlon Brando, Al Pacino and John Cazale.

SOME of the home accessories are from "Ang Pagbabago," his old TV show.



SIMPLE center table is in keeping with the Zen theme.

SCREEN stud sweats it out on the treadmill at least four times a week.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BEFORE KING ARTHUR, THERE WAS EXCALIBUR.
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THE LAST LEGION

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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DTI, movie-TV board keep hands off 'Wowowee'

By Marinel R. Cruz

GOVERNMENT agencies are taking a hands-off stance regarding alleged cheating on the noontime game show "Wowowee," and ABS-CBN is standing by the program host who maintains that no irregularity transpired in its Aug. 20 episode.

An official of the Department of Trade and Industry told INQUIRER Entertainment that the DTI is mandated to protect consumers' rights, but not to oversee the interest of contestants in TV game shows.

The source added: "Only market promotions, like raffles or contests, are required to be registered with the DTI. Game shows are not."

Movie and Television Review and Classification Board chair Marissa Laguardia, meanwhile, said she had yet to receive a formal complaint against "Wowowee." However, she said, friends had prompted her to review the show's Aug. 20 episode.

She said the episode was "neither too explicit nor too violent" and, as such, did not violate MTRCB regulations.

During the episode in question, a new game, "Wilyonaryo," was launched. In the game, contestants were asked questions under pain of elimination until only one of them remained. The final contestant, who had won P37,000, was made to choose from several wheels, one of which contained the P2-million pot.

The host, Willie Revillame, bartered with the contestant, offering P100,000 for the wheel she had picked. She accepted the offer.

Suspicion

When it was time to reveal where the jackpot money was, Revillame pulled out two different cards instead of one from the wheel, raising suspicions that he could manipulate the game's results.

The network would later say in a statement that it was a "mechanical glitch," the game being new.

"Wowowee," a top-rating show on the network's global circuit via The Filipino Channel (TFC), has been fraught with controversies, the biggest of which was last year's stampede during its first anniversary show, where 71 were killed.

PDI FILE PHOTO

Willie asks: 'Why, Joey?'

HE WAS HURT, THAT WAS CLEAR. BUT Willie Revillame also swung between peeved and furious during Wednesday's episode of "Wowowee," in the course of a protracted tirade against colleague-turned-critic Joey de Leon, from a rival program on GMA 7.

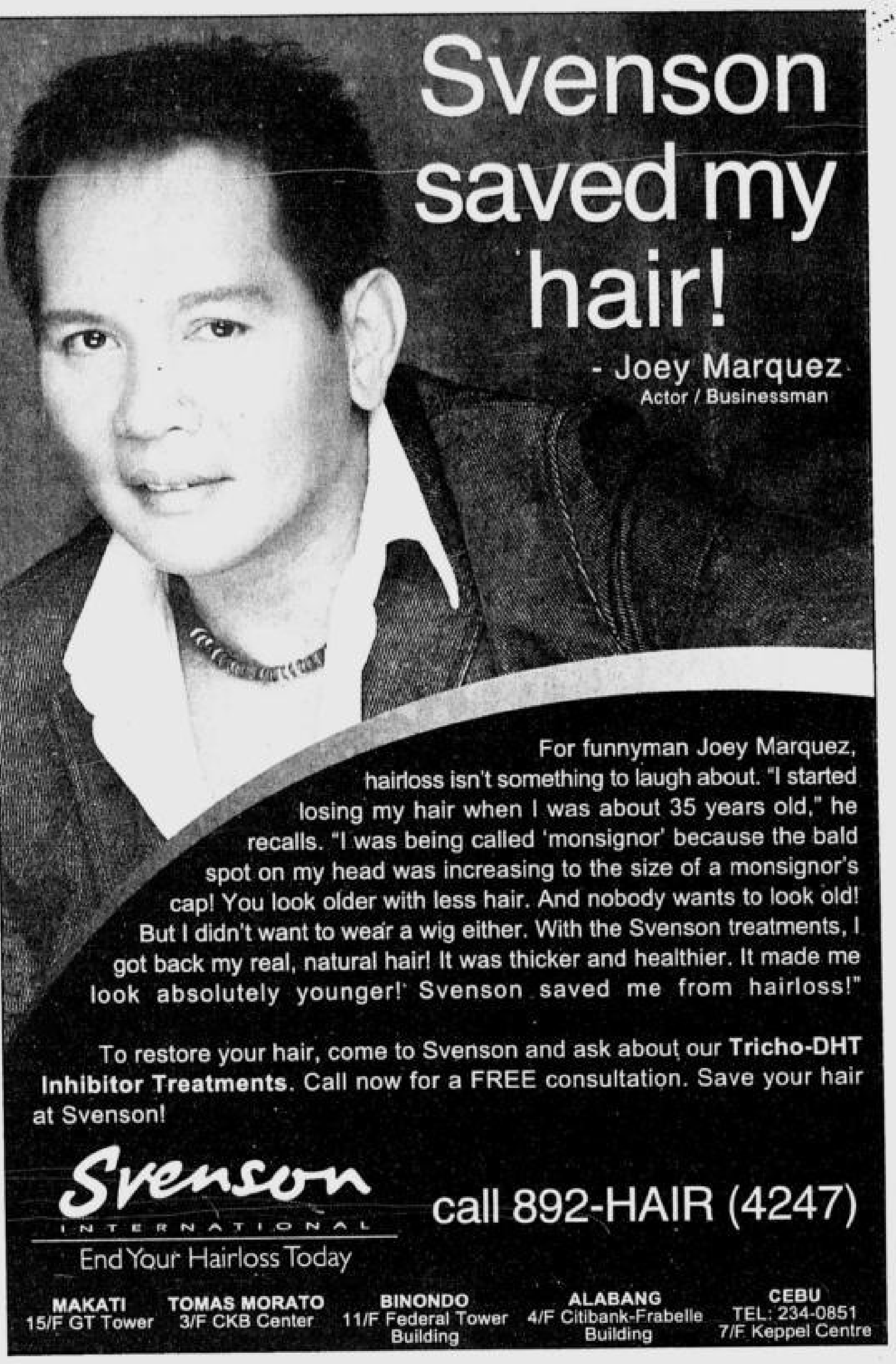
Speaking in Filipino and sobbing intermittently, Revillame denied talk of cheating in "Wowowee" (story at left) which, he said, De Leon had used to attack him on TV.

Revillame lamented: "You shouldn't do this, Joey. I idolize you." And then he was livid: "*Sa 'yo na ang* ratings. *Akala mo kung sino kang malinis.*"

For a short while, too, he sounded defeated: "*Subukan mong mag-*host *ng* show *mag-isa, araw-araw. Ako, kahit may sakit, bumabangon ako para magpasaya ng mga tao.*"

He rallied his followers. "*Kailangang magsalita po ako, kahit tanggalin na ako dito.*" The studio audience howled in protest.

Joey de Leon did not return INQUIRER Entertainment's calls for a reaction.



Svenson saved my hair!
- Joey Marquez
Actor / Businessman

For funnyman Joey Marquez, hairloss isn't something to laugh about. "I started losing my hair when I was about 35 years old," he recalls. "I was being called 'monsignor' because the bald spot on my head was increasing to the size of a monsignor's cap! You look older with less hair. And nobody wants to look old! But I didn't want to wear a wig either. With the Svenson treatments, I got back my real, natural hair! It was thicker and healthier. It made me look absolutely younger! Svenson saved me from hairloss!"

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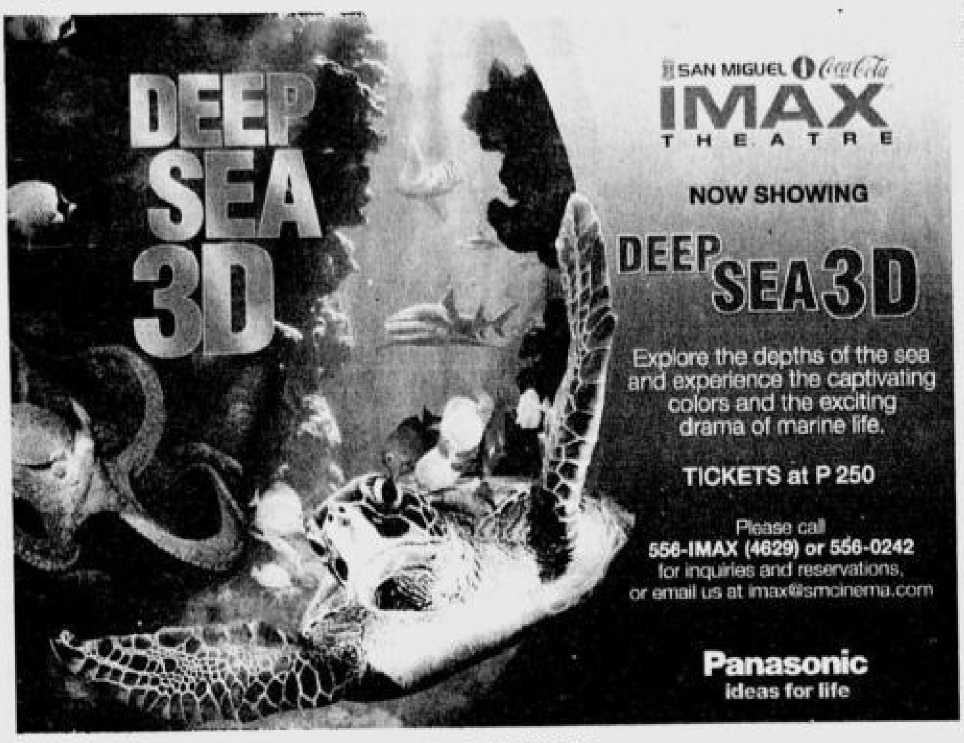
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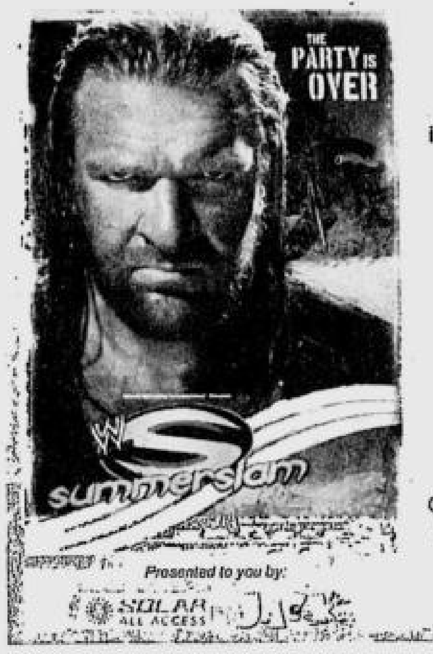
SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 1408
4 LAST LEGION
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 INVASION
7 RISE
8 BLADES OF GLORY
9 A LOVE STORY
10 DON'T LOOK BACK
11 HAIRSPRAY
12 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 A LOVE STORY
4 1408

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 1408
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 1408
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 INVASION
4 LAST LEGION

SPORTSTIME



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2 1408
3 INVASION
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6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
7 EVAN ALMIGHTY
8 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 INVASION
4 A LOVE STORY
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 1408

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
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2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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1 BLIND DATING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 1408
3 INVASION
4 OUIJA
5 A LOVE STORY
6 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

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1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 A LOVE STORY
4 RUSH HOUR 3

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1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 A LOVE STORY
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 1408

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 1408
2 A LOVE STORY
3 INVASION
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 A LOVE STORY
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 RISE

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SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
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2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 A LOVE STORY
4 1408
5 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
6 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
3 A LOVE STORY
4 RISE

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 LICENSE TO WED
2 SINKING OF JAPAN
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 A LOVE STORY
5 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 RESERVED
8 MY KUYA'S WEDDING

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 INVASION
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 1408
5 SIGNOS
6 A LOVE STORY
7 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
8 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 A LOVE STORY
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 LICENSE TO WED

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2 1408
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4 HAIRSPRAY
PREMIERE
BOURNE ULTIMATUM

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Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
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1 THE INVACION
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 A LOVE STORY
4 MY KUYAS WEDDING

star mall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 A LOVE STORY
4 MY KUYAS WEDDING
5 RESERVED

metropolis star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 8433954
1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 1408
3 LAST LEGION
4 A LOVE STORY

THEATRES
1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
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1 A LOVE STORY
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 RESERVED
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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 1408
2 RUSH HOUR - 3
3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
4 THE INVACION
5 LAST LEGION
6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 THE INVACION
8 MY KUYAS WEDDING
9 A LOVE STORY
10 DON'T LOOK BACK

Blue Wave
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1 A LOVE STORY
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 THE INVATION
4 LAST LEGION

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334229
1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 MY KUYAS WEDDING
5 THE INVATION

MARKETPLACE
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1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY
4 SIGNOS

Masagana CINEMA
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1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4449346)
1 RUSH HOUR - 3
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 1408
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 THE INVACION
4 A LOVE STORY

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 A LOVE STORY
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

World CINEMAS
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2 THE INVATION
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 1408

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1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 A LOVE STORY
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plandel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4067736
1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY

Lianas Cinema
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1 SIGNOS
2 THREE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
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2 MALAGKIT
3 A LOVE STORY
4 LICENSE TO WED
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Fiesta World Mall
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1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 RUSH HOUR - 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 PLEASE CALL
2 PLEASE CALL

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Chris Medina in a specia

SHOW TIME

JAZZ-R&B-POP PIANIST-SINGER CHRIS Medina, who has landed in the pages of the Hollywood-based entertainment publication Variety, performs in "Romance a la Jazz" on Sept. 8, 8:30 p.m. at Tropezz Bar-Resto, 2F, Greenbelt 3, Makati.

A pioneering performer on the Princess Cruise Lines' "Love Boat" ships, Medina is a world-class Pinoy musician whose talents have likewise been appreciated in resorts and hotels across Spain, the Greek Islands, the Swiss Rivviera, Italy and Amsterdam.

MEDINA

"Chris Medina immediately knows his audience the minute he lays his fingers on the ivories," wrote Variety's Simon Terlinden.

For his Tropezz show, Medina will be backed by guitarist Edgar Avenir, bassist Ed Carino, drummer Jun Viray and Vancouver-based saxophonist Alvin Cornista.

For tickets and/or reservations, call 0917-522-6966.

Jed Madela at Dusit

Jed Madela reunites with his band

Prime Council in a one-night-only s
Sept. 5 at Fiesta San Miguel, Dus
Makati. The P300 entrance is cons

Bamboo in Bicol

The Bicol province welcomes I
as the band performs on Sept. 14
Venezia, Legaspi City, and Sept. 1
LCC Mall, Naga City.

The shows are part of the Winst
cert series and serve as a prelude t
mous nine-day Penafrancia festiva

Jazz in Baguio

Jacqui Magno leads the lineup
formers in "Jazz for Tonight," an
tional concert on Sept. 15, 7 p.m. a
Par 7, South Drive, Baguio City.

The event is organized by the
Writers Group in cooperation with
Country Club and Smart Commun

ROUNDUP

Clever musical comedy

ATLANTIS PRODUCTIONS' STAGING of the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical "Avenue Q" runs from Sept. 7 to 23 at the Carlos Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Makati.

Described as a clever and irreverent musical comedy, the musical is about Princeton, a fresh-out-of-college puppet torn between monster-next-door Kate and sexy chanteuse Lucy T. Slut.

It won three Tony Awards in 2004 and is still playing to SRO audiences on Broadway and London's West End.

The Manila production stars Rachel Alejandro as Kate Monster/Lucy T. Slut, Felix Rivera as Princeton/Rod, Aiza Seguerra as Gary Coleman, Frenchie Dy as Christmas Eve, and Joel Trinidad as Nicky/Trekkie Monster. Bobby Garcia and Chari Arespacochaga direct. Call 892-7078 or 891-9999.

Lasallian Scholarum awardees

In the recently concluded 2007 Lasallian Scholarum Awards of De La Salle University-Manila, broadcast journalist Kara David and entertainment editor Nestor Cuartero received recognition for their outstanding coverage of timely youth and education issues.

NESTOR Cuartero and Kara David

David won in the outstanding televised feature for her "I-Witness" documentary, "Mga Batang Hiram," which discussed the plight of Aeta children in Zambales.

Cuartero bagged the outstanding print feature for his Philippine Panorama article, "A Bridge For the Kids," which highlighted La Salle's efforts to introduce its students to their social responsibilities.

AIZA SEGUERRA

Other winners include INQUIRI
Luzon correspondent Tonette Ore
standing feature on youth and e
for "Law Grad Gives New Meanin
ta'") and photographer Edwin B.
(outstanding photograph on youth
ucation for "Life in the Evacuation"

All winners received cash prizes
mon Orlina glass sculptures.

US-RP trade show

The recent US-Philippine Exp
held in Pomona, California re
gathered the largest group of Filip
ticipants in a trade show.

One of the participating compa
Rev'lation International, who
founder, celebrity makeup and fas
pert Fanny Serrano, attended the e

FANNY SER

"All kinds of companies were there, including real estate firms selling condominiums in the Philippines. Entertainment numbers were presented by Pops Fernandez and Tuesday Vargas, as well as US-based singers Lirio Vital and Pol Enriquez."

What has the event taught Fann
"I discovered *na sabik na sa*
Pinoy for local products. Especial
they learned that our shampoo h
aloe vera and coconut oil. They a

In Berlin with Tom Cruis

From page 14

Tom and his business partner, **Paula Wagner**, are rolling out since they took over United Artists, which was founded by movie legends **Douglas Fairbanks**, **Charlie Chaplin**, **Mary Pickford** and **D.W. Griffith**. Asked what his and Paula's plans were for the studio that launched such successful franchises as "Rocky," "The Pink Panther" and "James Bond," the actor replied, "I am going to really try to do the best that I can and tell interesting stories that I find compelling. When you look at the first two pictures that we have, Mr. **(Robert) Redford's** 'Lions for Lambs' (Tom stars with Robert and **Meryl Streep**) and 'Valkyrie,' you'll see what I mean. I made one picture, 'Rain Man,' there.

A lot of scope

"That's what we are going to do. I want to make pictures with a lot of scope. I love big movies with great characters. Look at the movies that I've produced—the 'Mission' pictures, 'Vanilla Sky,' 'Minority Report' and 'The War of the Worlds.' It's a wide range of cinematic fare that I enjoy."

Elsewhere on the terrace lit with tea candles flickering in Berlin's warm breeze in August, Bryan Singer, Bill Nighy, the beautiful Carice van Houten, Eddie Izzard and other cast members shared their stories about filming a potentially powerful and important movie, the kind that may reap awards and sweep the box-office charts races.

Set visit

The following day, we went to the set—a pre-war villa southwest of Berlin, in an area supposedly like the Beverly Hills of Berlin. The homes' backyards have a terrific view of the Schlachtensee lake.

Inside the house, the day's scene unfolded: Tom and Carice waltz as their children play. One of the kids changes the music to one more suited to their mock battle. Tom and Carice stop and look on, amused at first, but as one of the

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Other participating vocalists are PR consultant and book editor Gou de Jesus and INQUIRER correspondent Desiree Caluza, with Richard Cariño on piano, Enrico Subido on lead guitar, Egay Buñing on bass, Butch Cando on drums and Joanifer Abubo on sax.

Emcees for the event are Linc Drilon and Nonnette Bennett.

The concert will benefit the Baguio Writers Group's series of writing workshops, outreach program, a planned poetry and prose anthology on the City of Pines, and its ailing founding member Napoleon Javier, a stroke victim.

Seats are limited. Text or call 0927-989-0191.

The Bloomfields at Enchanted Kingdom

Enchanted Kingdom presents the Bloomfields on Sept. 15, 22 and 29.

All shows start at 5 p.m. at the Enchanted Kingdom Bandstand.

Call 830-2111 to 16 or log on to www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph

Tomorrow

Imago, 5 p.m. at Robinsons Novaliches.

Sept.2

Jose Mari Chan at the Block, SM City North Edsa.

Imago, 5 p.m. at Robinsons Pampanga.

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tawas, papaya and cucumber soaps."

Another best-seller was Judy Ann Santos' line of baby products—lotion, shampoo, diaper spray, baby cologne and baby oil.

Big budget

A big budget is said to have been rolled out for the comedy flick, "Apat Dapat, Dapat Apat," shot in Hong Kong.

Ruffa Mae Quinto, Candy Pangilinan, Eugene Domingo and Pokwang star as "one-four-all, all-four-one" friends who try their luck as domestic helpers in the former British colony.

"With four top comediennes, how could you go wrong?" says Viva Films' Vincent Del Rosario.

"APAT Dapat, Dapat Apat"

Wenn Deramas directs from a screenplay by Mel Mendoza-Del Rosario and Arlene Tamayo.

Zenith Zuñiga-Delgado, 56

Former folk singer Zenith Zuñiga-Delgado passed away on Aug. 25 after battling a fierce fight against cancer. She was 56.

Zenith, wife of Ernie Delgado of the Electromaniacs, was a nurse by profession and is credited for having taught brother Nonoy Zuñiga how to play the guitar and encouraging him to be a professional singer.

Zenith's remains lie at the Garden Suite, Loyola Memorial Garden, Makati City. Cremation is at 4 p.m. tomorrow at the Loyola Crematorium.

e, on the set …

US actor Owen Wilson arrives for the world premiere of "Wedding Crashers" in Leicester Square in London in this July 4, 2005 file photo. Wilson issued a statement on Monday asking to be left alone so he can "heal in private" following reports that he attempted suicide. REUTERS

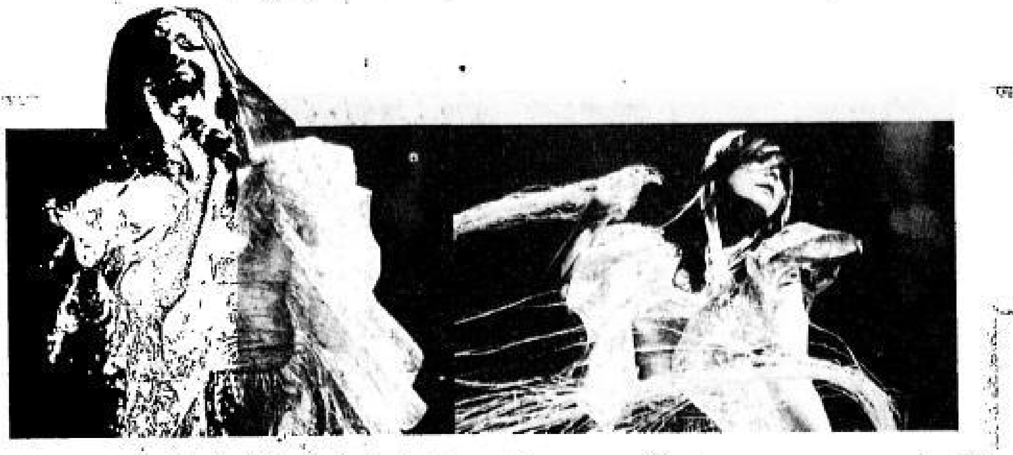
d to be killed, the camera zooms in on Tom. His turns sad and anguished as he is reminded of the n mission he has to carry out, which could mean he may no longer be with his family.

the aid of dialogue, his face obscured by an eye still manages to convey grief and turmoil. Watchne reminded us why we've always believed that underrated actor. The superstar fame, controverrelenting public scrutiny have often succeeded in e fact that the guy is one of the finest actors of his

ally?

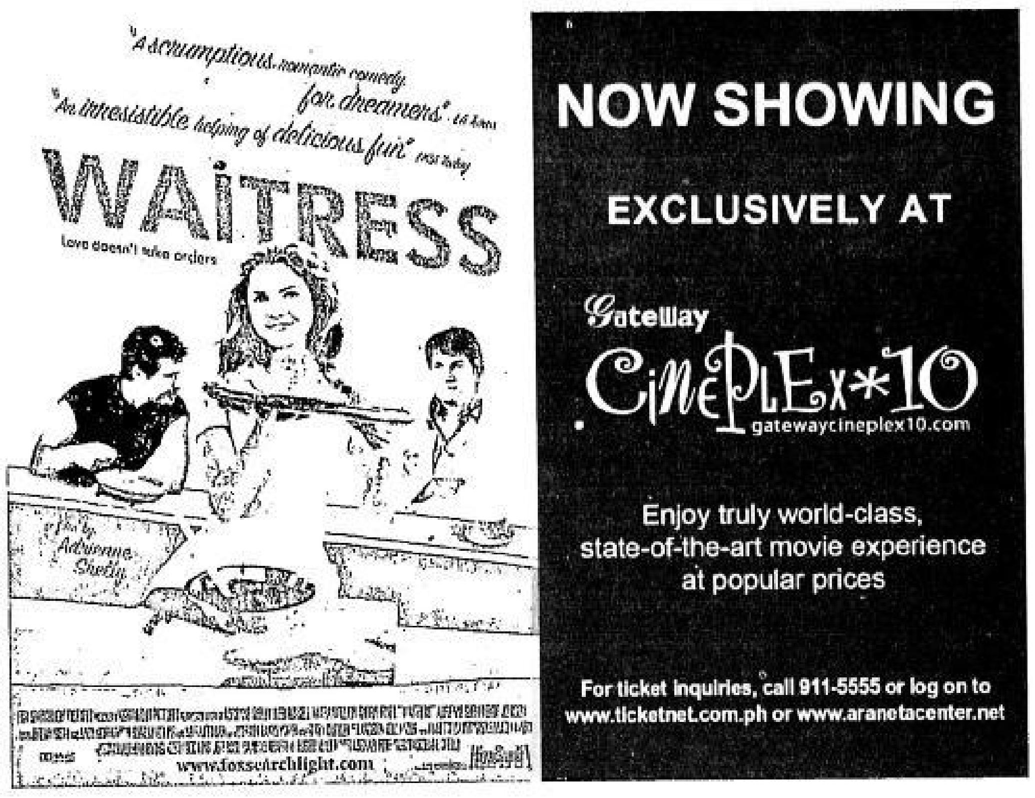
ven? News of **Owen Wilson**'s suicide attempt . The actor has always come across at interviews ry laid-back, someone least likely to stress out ng.

olumnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com and read "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerblogpalesreport.



BJORK BRINGS IT…

… to the Rock en Seine music festival, Aug. 24-26 this year in Saint-Cloud, near Paris. The event also featured rockers Rita Mitsouko, Erik Truffaz, Emilie Simon, Dinosaur Jr. Mogwai and Tool. AFP



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"An irresistible helping of delicious fun"
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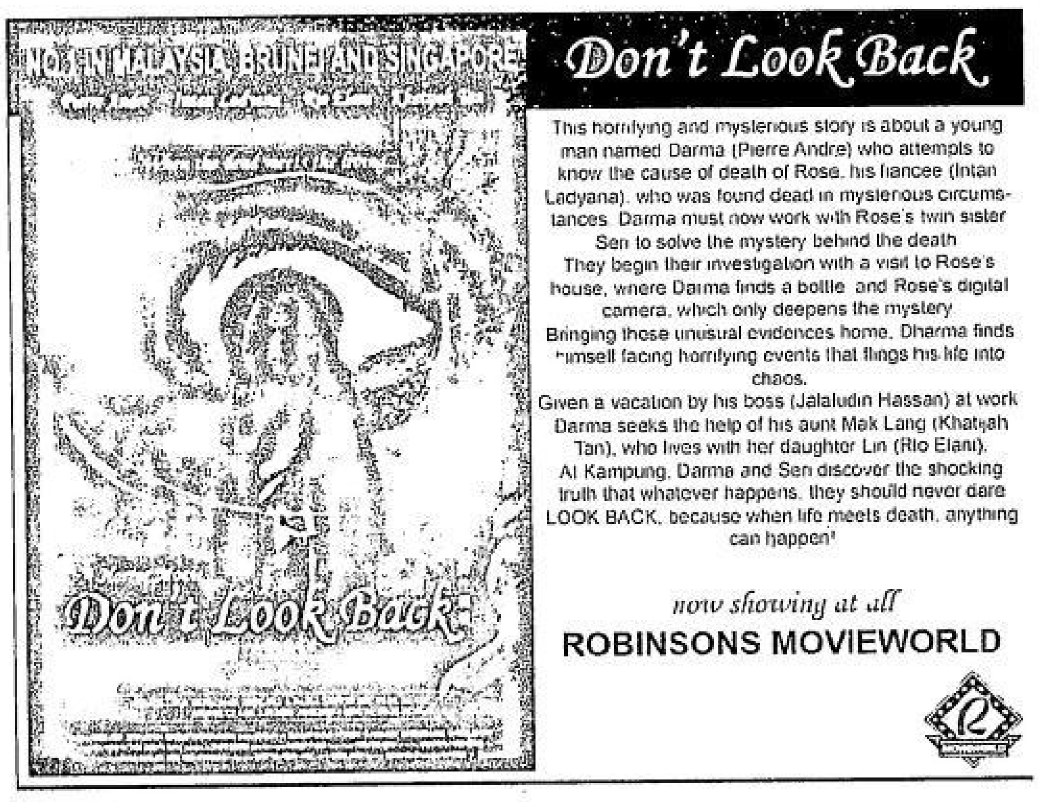


NO.1 IN MALAYSIA, BRUNEI AND SINGAPORE
Don't Look Back

Don't Look Back

This horrifying and mysterious story is about a young man named Darma (Pierre Andre) who attempts to know the cause of death of Rose, his fiancee (Intan Ladyana), who was found dead in mysterious circumstances. Darma must now work with Rose's twin sister Sen to solve the mystery behind the death.

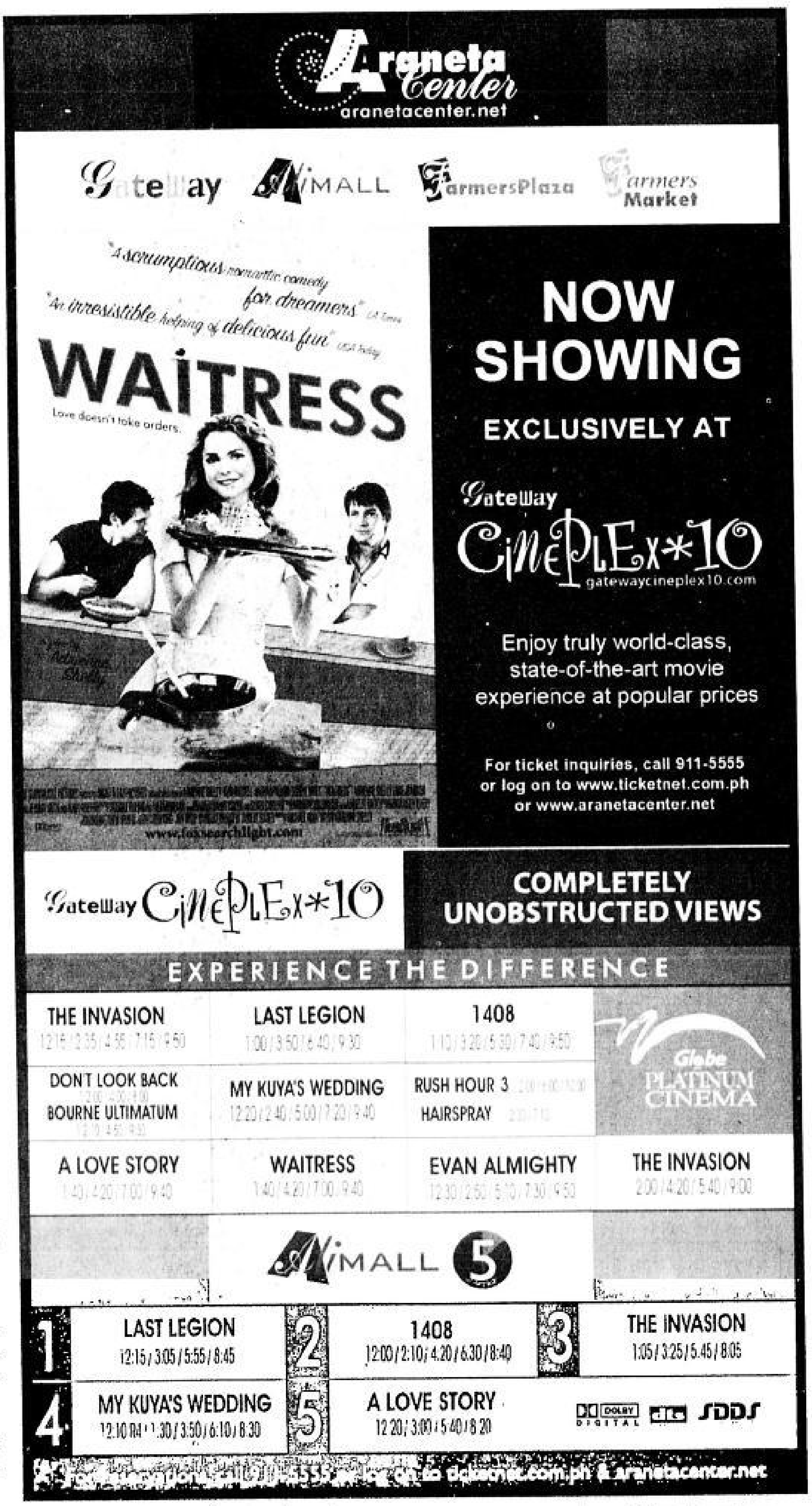
They begin their investigation with a visit to Rose's house, where Darma finds a bottle and Rose's digital camera, which only deepens the mystery.

Bringing those unusual evidences home, Dharma finds himself facing horrifying events that flings his life into chaos.

Given a vacation by his boss (Jalaludin Hassan) at work Darma seeks the help of his aunt Mak Lang (Khatijah Tan), who lives with her daughter Lin (Rio Elani).

At Kampung, Darma and Sen discover the shocking truth that whatever happens, they should never dare LOOK BACK, because when life meets death, anything can happen!

now showing at all
ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD



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DON'T LOOK BACK BOURNE ULTIMATUM	MY KUYA'S WEDDING 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40	RUSH HOUR 3 HAIRSPRAY	
A LOVE STORY 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40	WAITRESS 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40	EVAN ALMIGHTY 12:30 / 2:50 / 5:10 / 7:30 / 9:50	THE INVASION 2:00 / 4:20 / 5:40 / 9:00

Ali MALL 5

1 LAST LEGION 12:15 / 3:05 / 5:55 / 8:45	2 1408 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40	3 THE INVASION 1:05 / 3:25 / 5:45 / 8:05
4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING 12:10 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30	5 A LOVE STORY 12:20 / 3:00 / 5:40 / 8:20	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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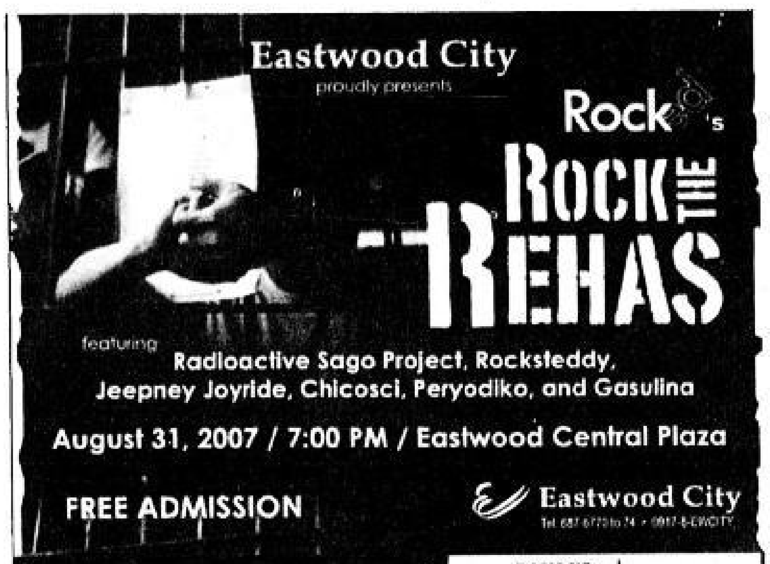

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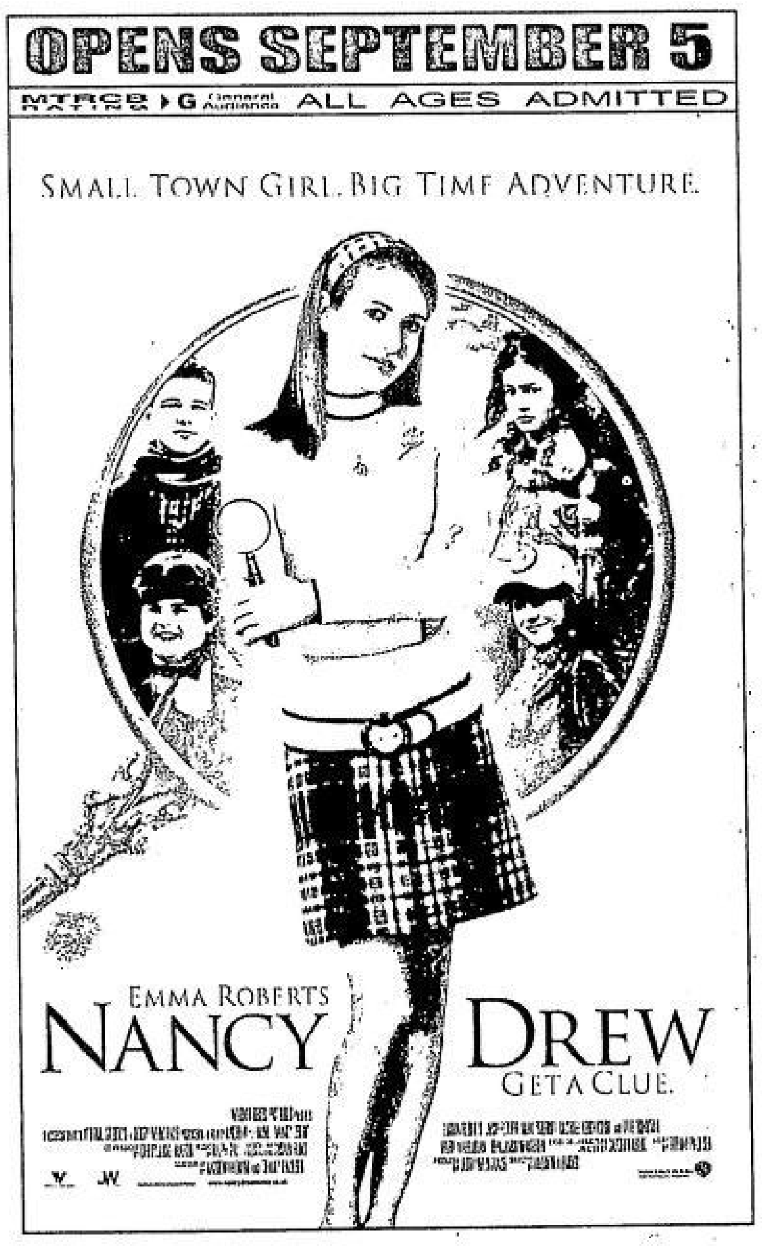
1	BOURNE ULTIMATUM 2:40, 5:25 PG-13	HAIRSPRAY 8:30, 11:10 G
2	INVASION 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 PG-13	
3	EVAN ALMIGHTY 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 G	
4	1408 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 PG-13	



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A Horror Movie
Don't Look Back 勿往后看
Jangan Pandang Belakang
WARNING: EXPECTANT MOTHERS & THOSE SUFFERING FROM HEART AILMENTS ARE ADVISED AGAINTS VIEWING THIS FILM.

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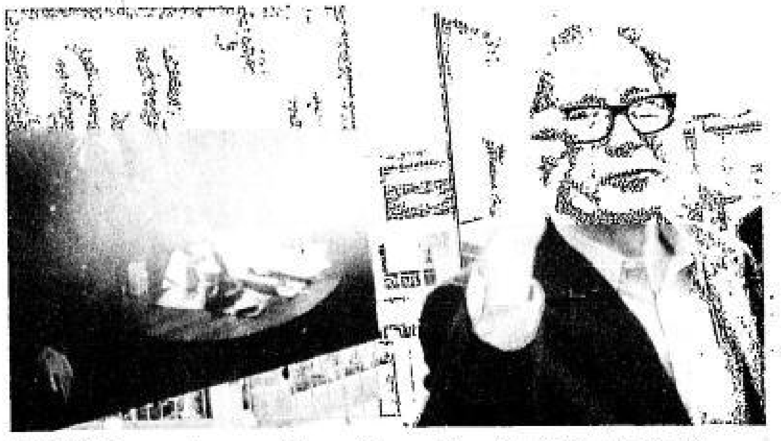
In Berlin with Tom Cruise, on the set of his controversial movie

WEARING his Stauffenberg haircut, Tom Cruise talks to reporters at Hotel De Rome in Berlin, where he is filming "Valkyrie," a suspense thriller based on the true story of a plot to assassinate Hitler in 1944.



BILL Nighy, now known all over the world as the half-squid, half-human Captain Davy Jones in the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies, discusses a still photo from the movie at the hotel's rooftop terrace.

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BERLIN, GERMANY—NEWS-MAKING controversies may have hounded "Valkyrie," **Tom Cruise**'s thriller about a plot to assassinate **Adolf Hitler**, but a recent exclusive visit to the set in the German capital showed that the production is proceeding as scheduled.

Our group of visiting journalists first met Tom on Sunday evening at Hotel De Rome, where he talked about his role, Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg, considered a hero in Germany. Stauffenberg and several German officers tried to stop Adolf Hitler and his atrocious regime with an assassination attempt. The thriller is being directed by **Bryan Singer** (the "X-Men" movies, "Superman Returns") from a script that reunites him with **Christopher McQuarrie**, his award-winning scriptwriter on the acclaimed "The Usual Suspects." **Nathan Alexander** co-wrote the screenplay.

Extraordinary

THE CAST includes distinguished British and German actors, including **Carice van Houten** (who plays Claus' wife, Nina von Stauffenberg), **Kenneth Branagh**, **Terence Stamp**, **Bill Nighy**, **Tom Wilkinson**, **Eddie Izzard**, **Jamie Parker**, **Christian Berkel** and **Thomas Kretschmann**.

"It's a very compelling story from a cinematic viewpoint," said Tom, who held a glass of iced soda drink as the sun set in the rooftop terrace of the hotel. In the background, the sun set dramatically on a courtyard, where books by the Jews and liberal writers were once burned by the Nazis.

Tom's hair was cut in the style of Stauffenberg, a Catholic who was executed after a bomb he put in a briefcase exploded but failed to kill the Fuhrer. Initial publicity photos emphasized the resemblance between Tom and Stauffenberg, the best known member of the Nazi resistance, who had earlier lost his left eye, right hand and two fingers on his left hand—the result of serious injuries he suffered when Allied forces strafed his vehicle in the Tunisian desert.

"It's an extraordinary screenplay that Chris McQuarrie wrote," Tom continued. "Bryan is a director that I had been wanting to work with since I saw 'The Usual Suspects.' He's a brilliant filmmaker. And the screenplay itself—my hands were sweating as I read it."

Of the heroism of Stauffenberg, the superstar said, "I thought of it in terms of what Stauffenberg represents. He was someone who realized that he had to take the steps that ultimately cost him his life... He recognized what was at stake. It's compelling when people stand up for things."

He told us the essence of the scene we were going to watch on the set the following day, Monday:

"Stauffenberg comes home and Nina has surprised him by coming from Bamberg to Berlin. Berlin, at this point in the movie, is not a safe city because of the bombings. But she comes to see him. He hasn't seen his children in a long time. He is missing an eye and a hand, but he has wonderful wit."

Practice

Asked what it was like to wear an eye patch for the role, Tom answered, "Your balance is thrown off—you need both eyes to get the depth of field."

He described the challenges of playing someone with severe injuries: "I practiced a lot dressing myself and moving around only with the fingers and not having a hand. The thing about Stauffenberg is that he still insisted on writing so I have been practicing with my left hand. He never wanted any help. Even though his legs were also injured, he worked very hard not to have anyone notice that."

A grandson of Stauffenberg's, **Philipp von Schulthesss**, is in the cast. He said that about 99 percent of his family supported the making of the movie. The earlier controversy centered on the objection of a sur viving son of Stauffenberg's.

"Valkyrie" is one of the first movies that

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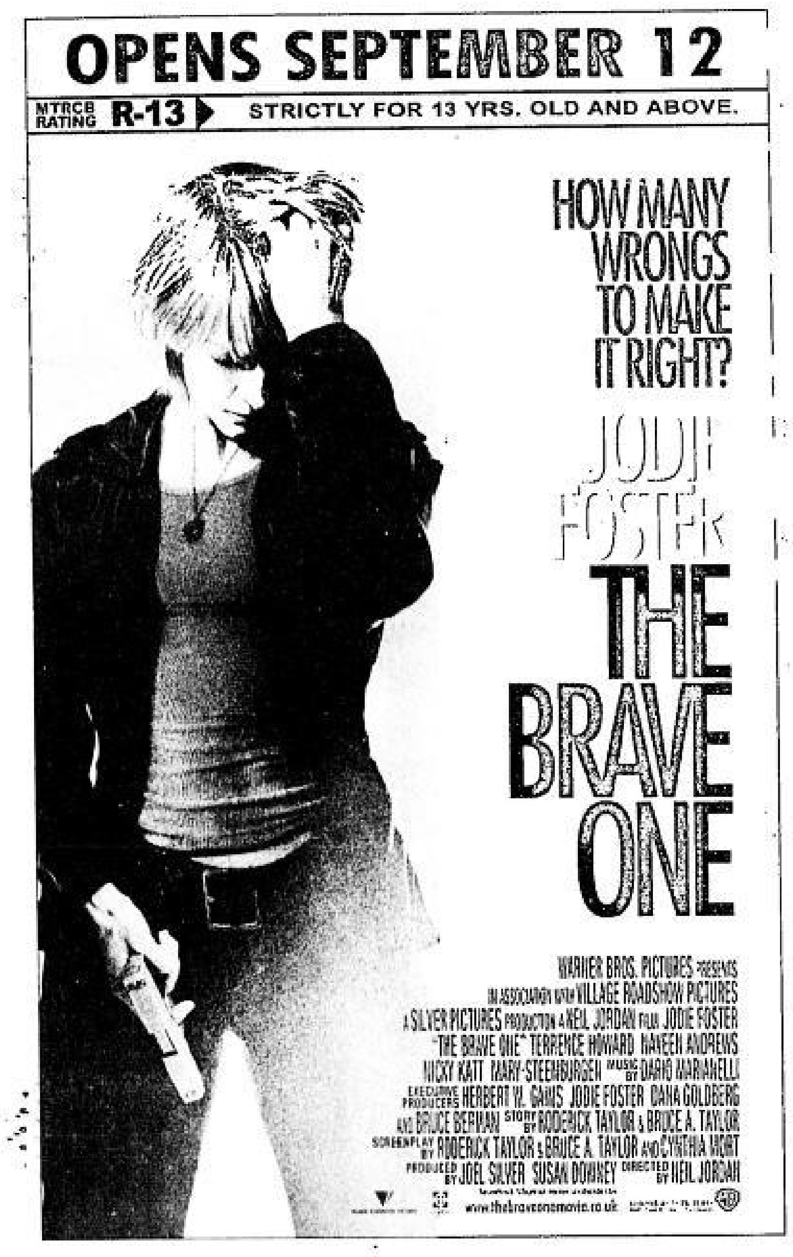

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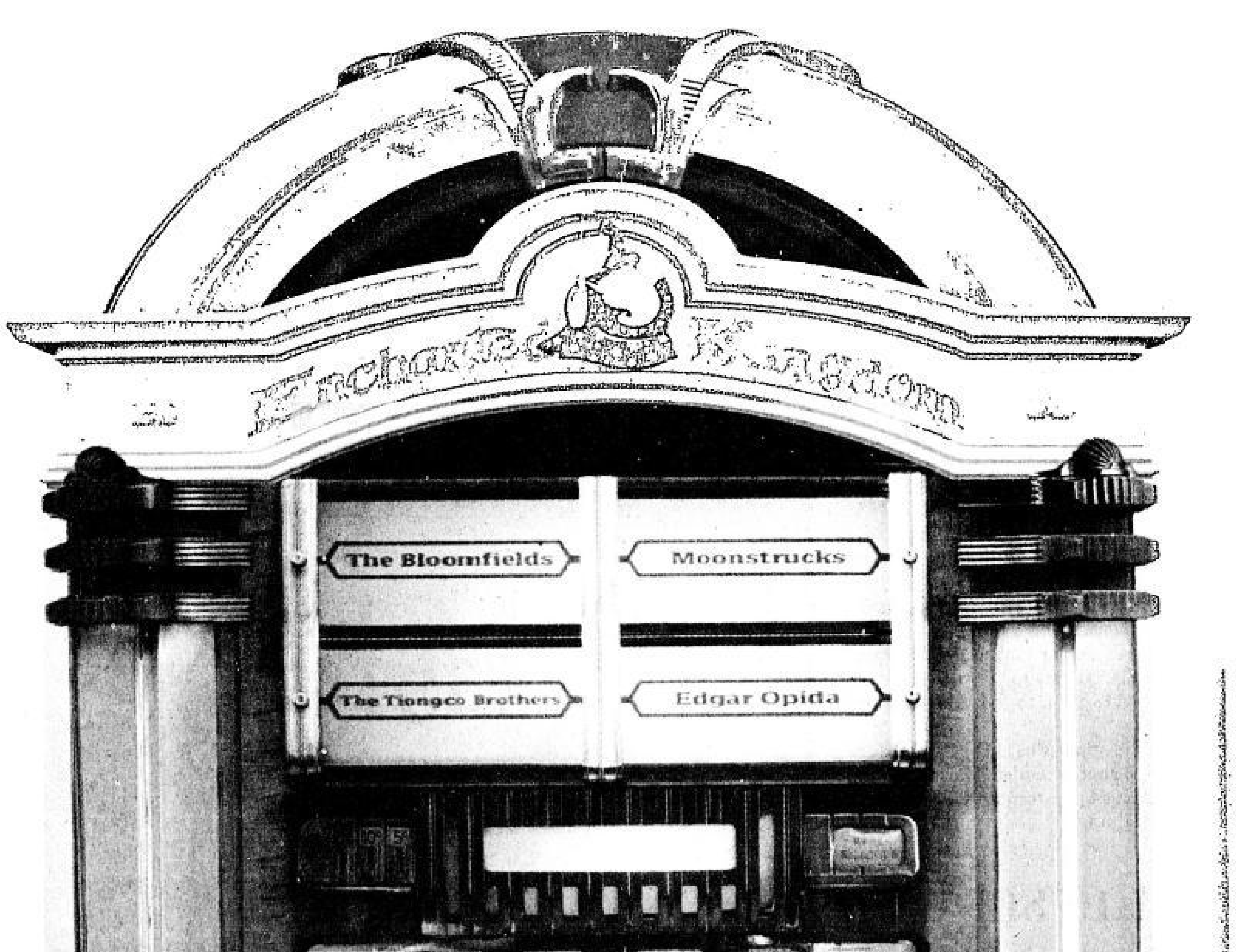

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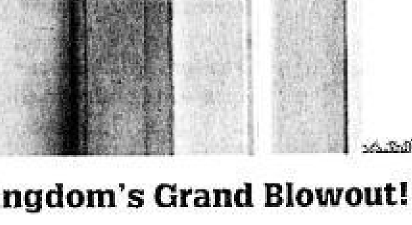

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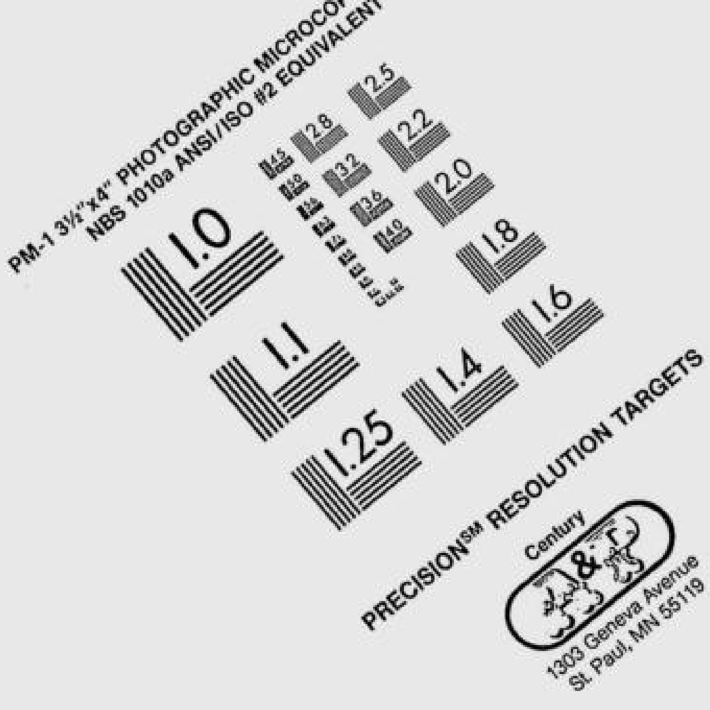
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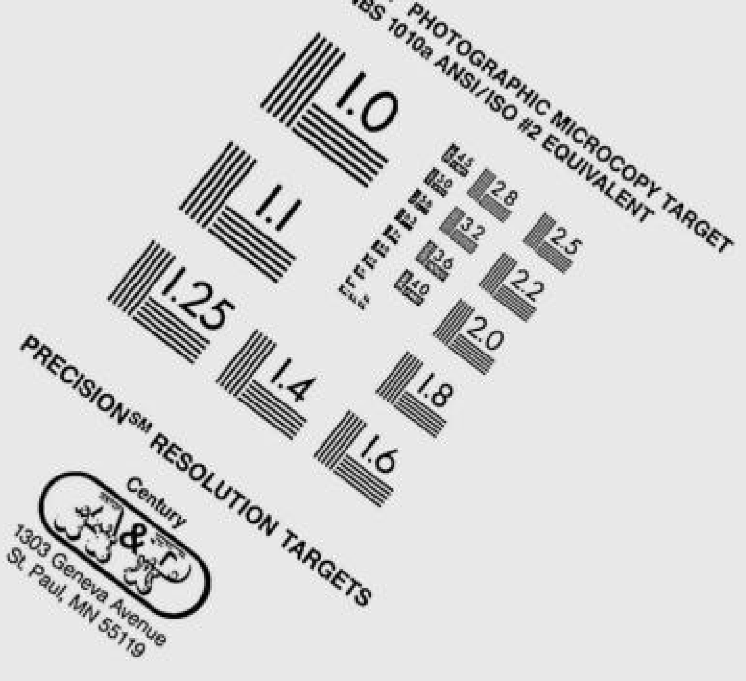
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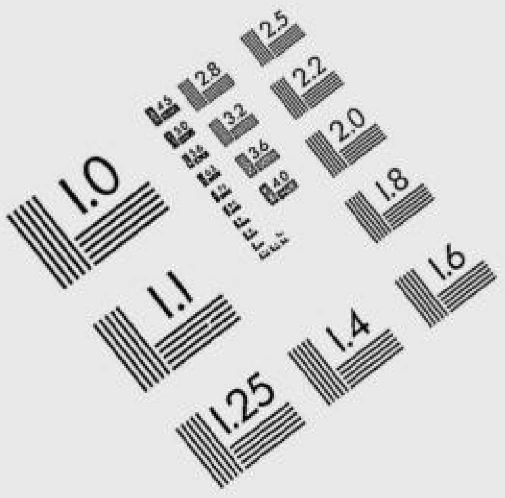
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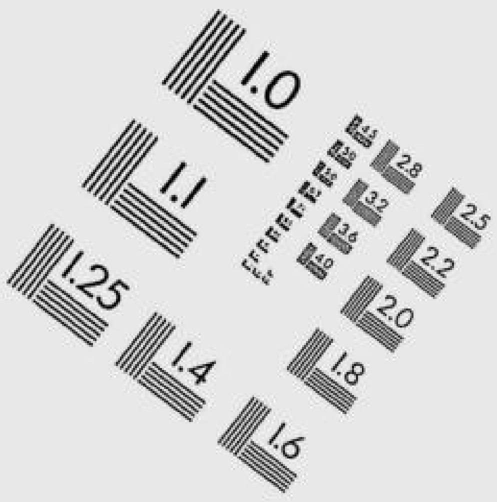
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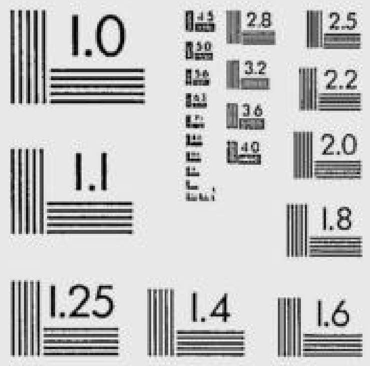
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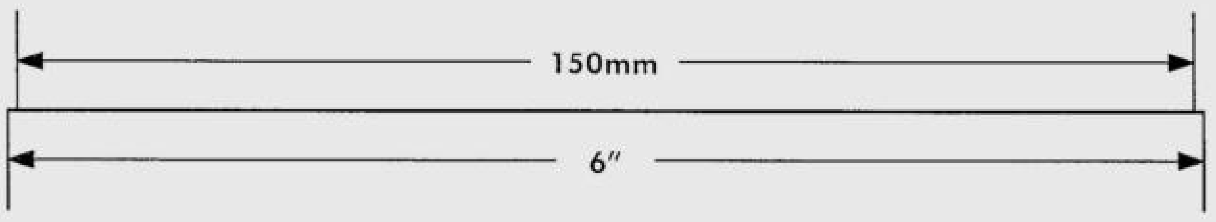

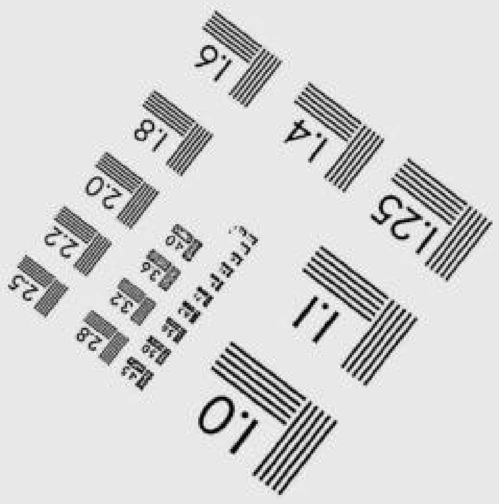
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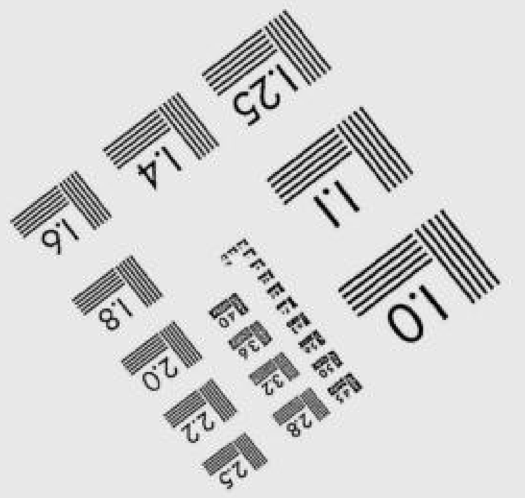
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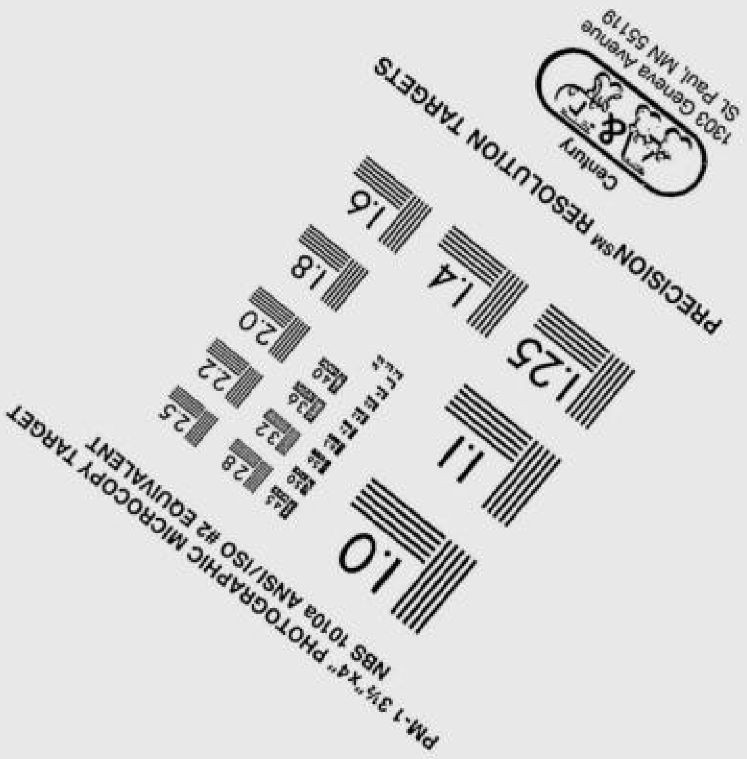
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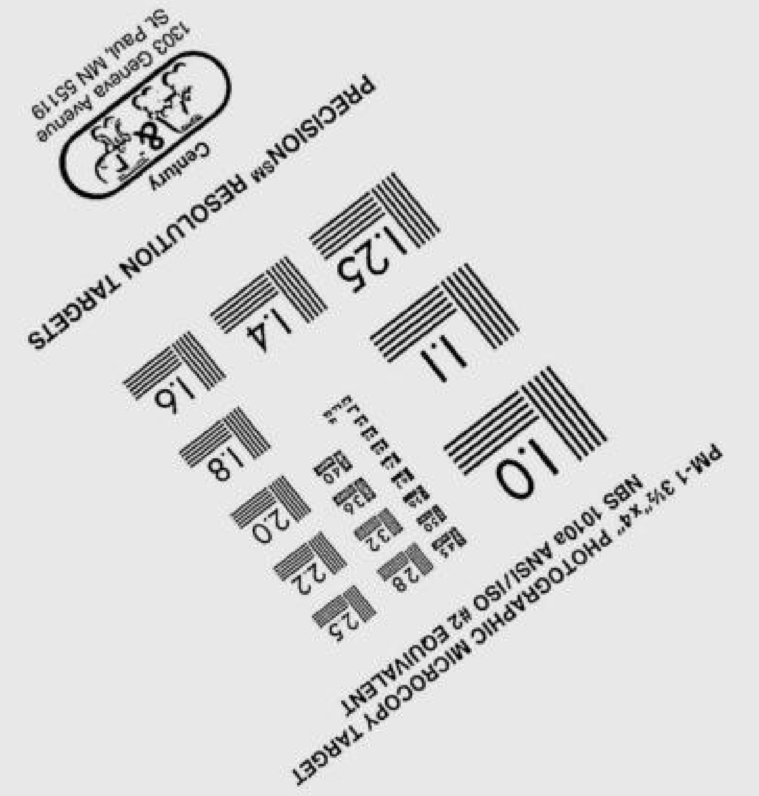
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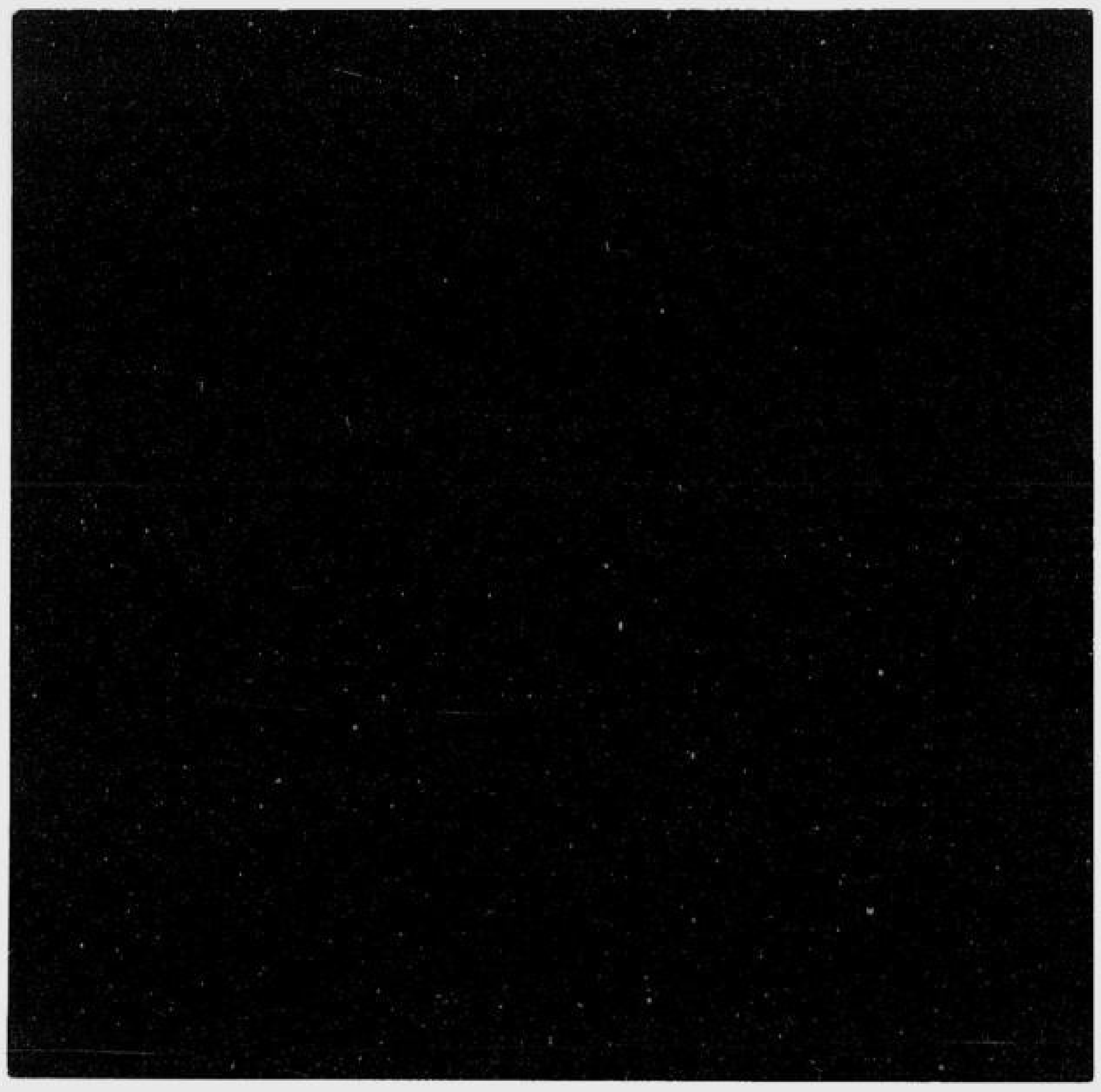

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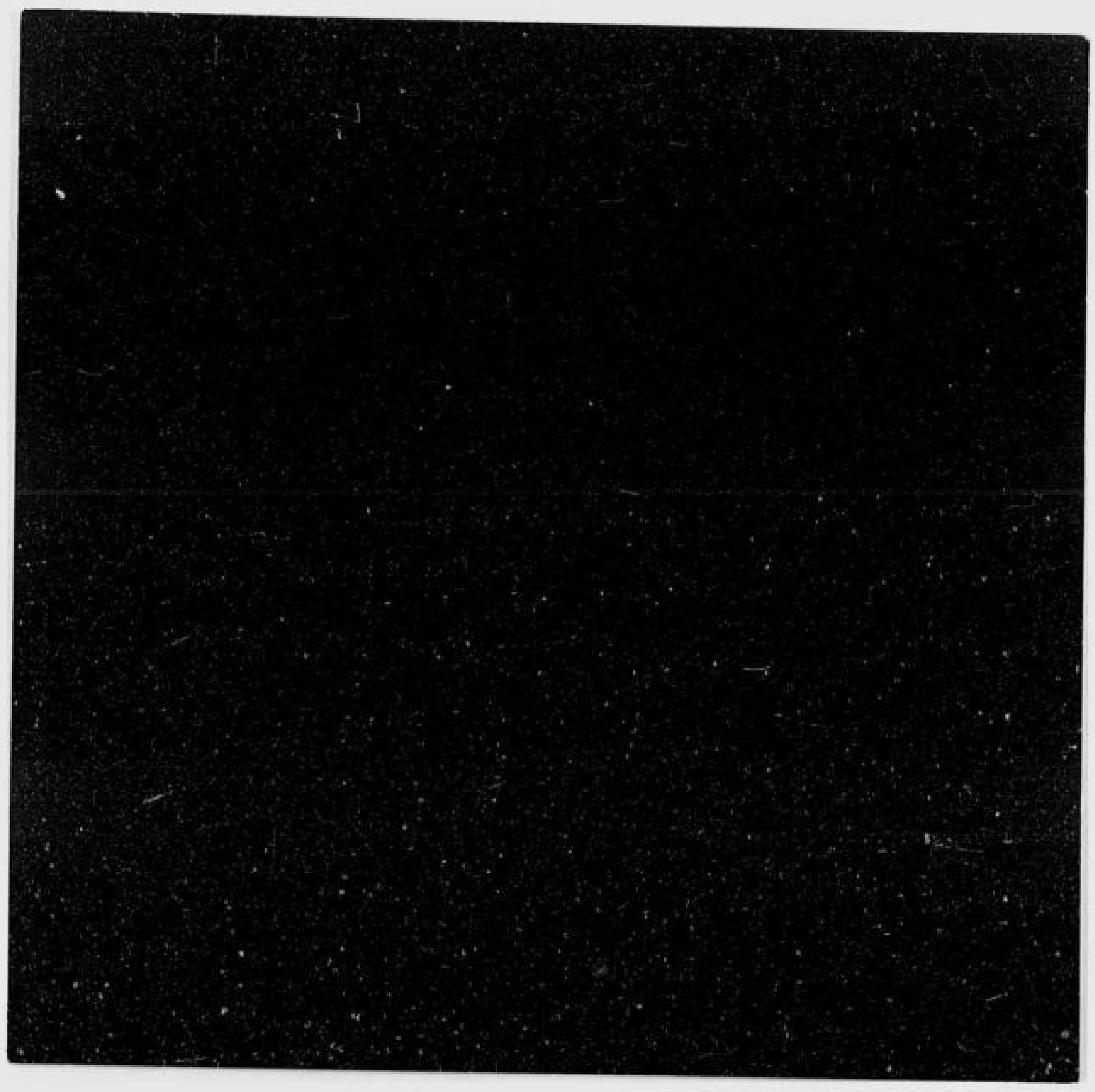

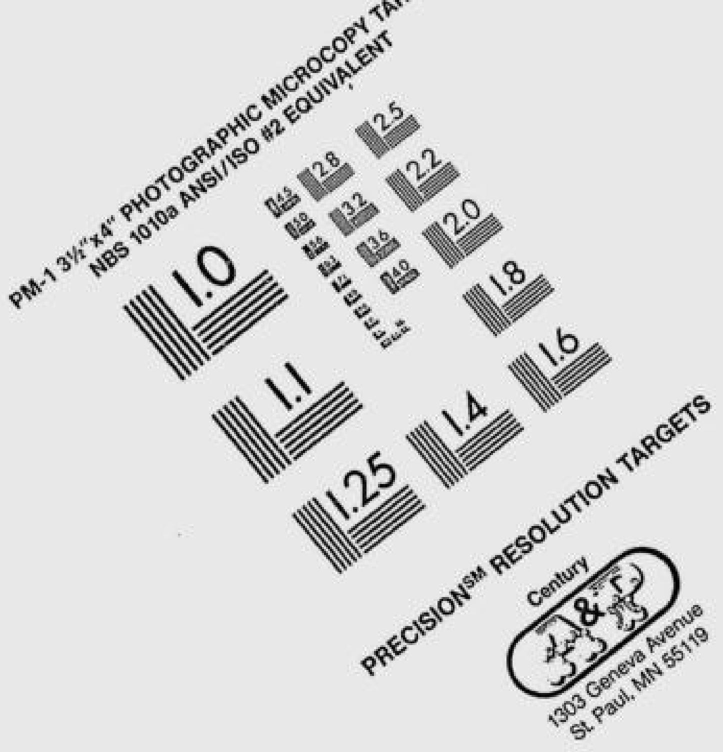
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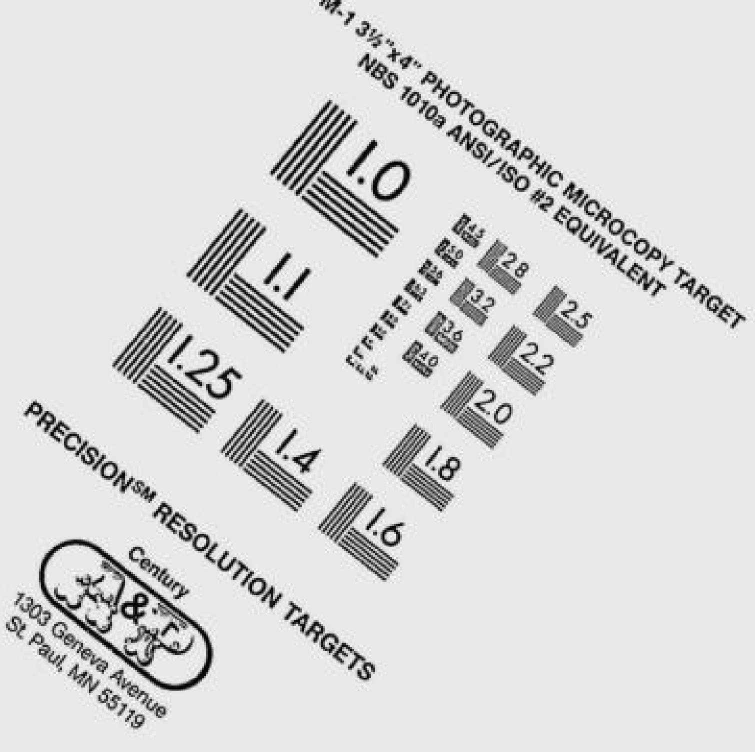
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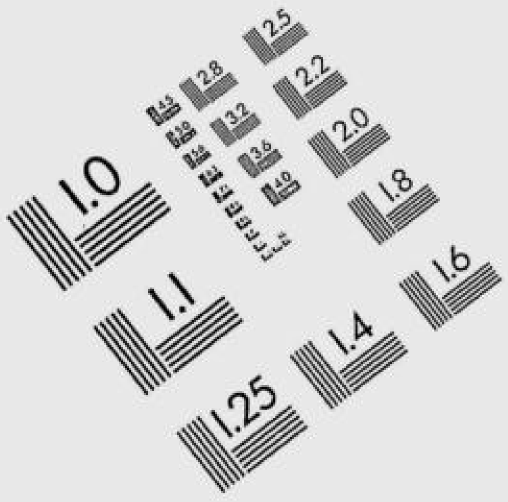
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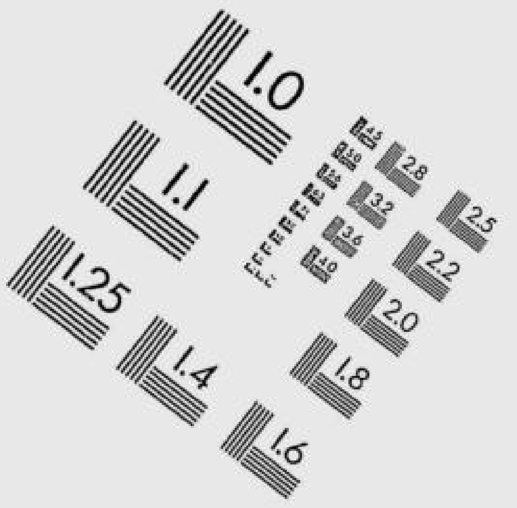
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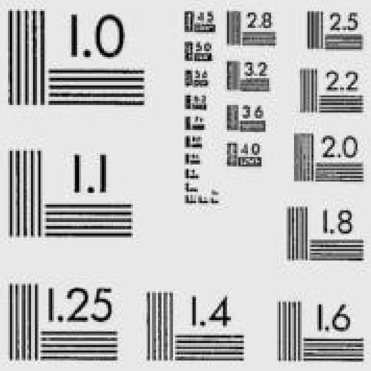
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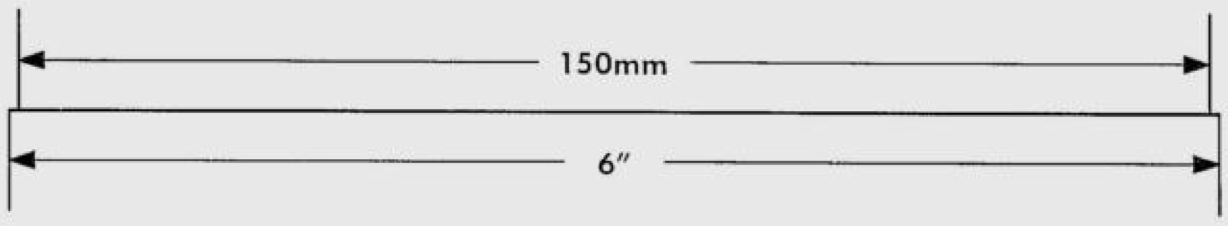

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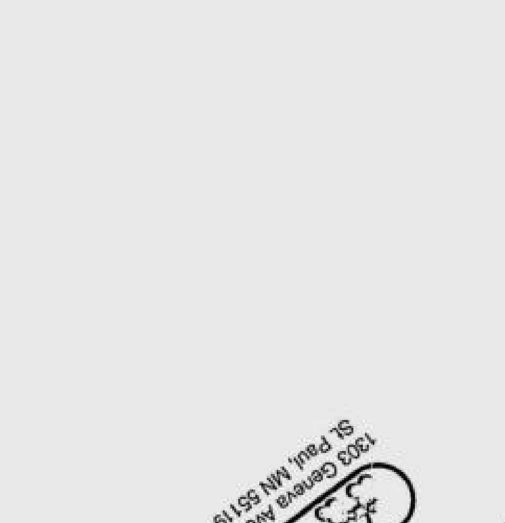
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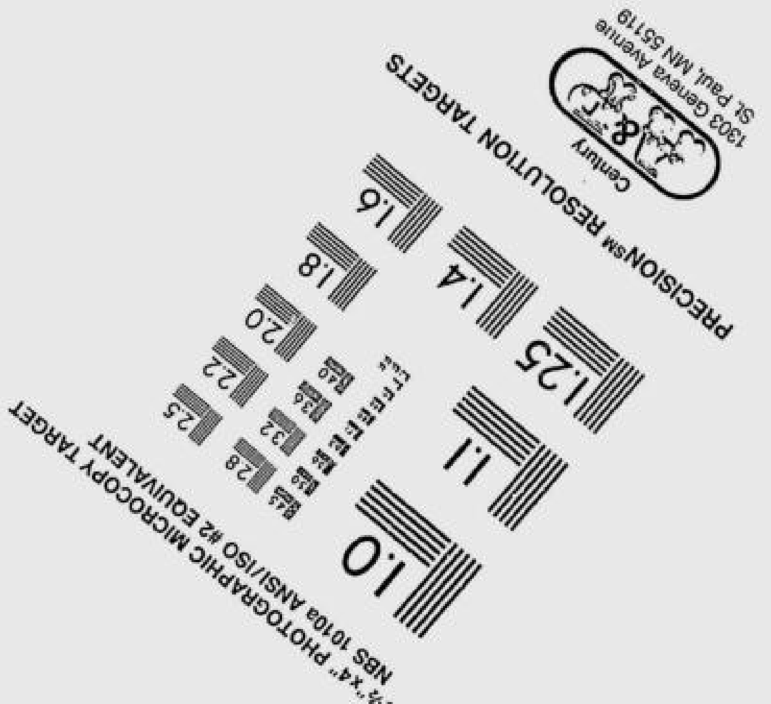
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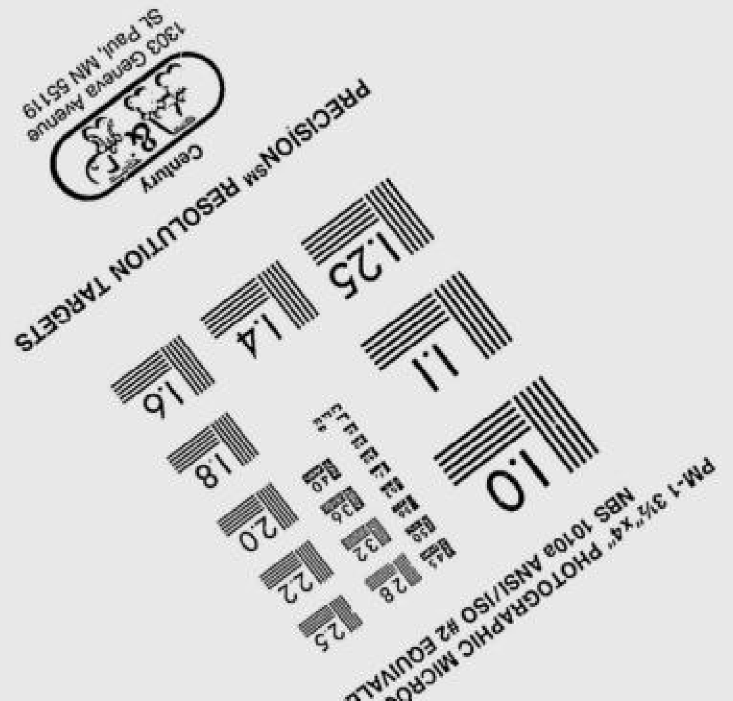
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